

THE MAGAZINE FOR HALLOWEENERS AND INBETWEENERS

Drôgazine

SEMI-ANNUAL #8

LANA LUSTER

*INTERVIEW
WITH A VAMP*

The Cycle Sluts
Ethyl Eichelberger
Jim Bailey
Pagan Holiday
Misstress Formika
AND MORE.....

\$5.95 USA (\$6.95 CAN)



As Seen on TV's Issue

"We've been busier than an Ollie North paper shredder."

Bon Jour, Y'All,

Iona Traylor here, so nice to make your acquaintance.

For years, I have been the envy of my trailer park friends because of my high fashion and flair for decorating. I can't tell you how many times folks have stopped to admire the yard in front of my trailer and how people stare when I sashay down the street. My friends constantly say, "Iona, you need to share your gift with the world." Well, I've gone through my family album and chosen some of my most tasteful photographs for my special collection of calendars, greeting cards and what not. I do hope your little old hearts can take it!

I'm currently getting ready to shoot pictures for next year's calendar and a card line.

Here at I.T. Productions we are taping polyester-filled comedy videos and writing script scenarios for interested producers and agents in New York and L.A., so you can imagine that we've been busier than an Ollie North paper shredder.

Be sure to ask for "Iona Traylor" calendars at Waldenbooks and a variety of retailers throughout the United States. In Vancouver, B.C. Contact Innovisions for further information about my "Queen of Southern Camp" card collection at 800-525-1908, or I.T. Productions, Inc., at 800-446-6295. Charity Fundraisers include calendar signings and promotional appearances to benefit; Sussex County AIDS Committee of Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, Full Circle AIDS Hospice Support of Norfolk, Virginia, and The Virginia Zoo, Norfolk, Virginia.

INTRODUCING

"From My Lot To Yours"

Iona Traylor™

Greeting Cards, Calendars, What Not.

I.T. PRODUCTIONS INC. Photo: ERIC THINGSTAD





EDIE TORIAL MESSAGE

If you're a drag enthusiast or just a tourist (and who isn't one or the other?), Dragazine invites you to dish with us! For those of you who are into 'recreational transvestism,' to others who are on the edge of the Gender Bell Curve, Dragazine is for you! It's a Whole 'Nother World!

Lois Commondenominator

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Dedicated to Paul
Pelletierri
aka Lyla Kadog

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About Our Fierce Ruling Cover Photo...
Lana Luster in "Transsexual Boulevard"
Courtesy Pleasure Productions



LANA LUSTER 12
THE PRINCESS WITH A PENIS -
Interview With A Vamp



ETHYL EICHELBERGER 21
AN OUTRE ENTREE INTO
PARA-RIDICULOUS HISTORY



MOMMA GODDAMN 40
THE CYCLE SLUT THEY CALL
THE OLD SEQUIN

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MEDIA Notes

by Lois Commondenominator

"Drag Queens are a 'safe' way to present homosexuality to the masses - as a cross-dressing joke," according to **L.A. Times** syndicated columnist **Liz Smith**, and we agree. Perhaps that is why Gramercy's '**Priscilla, Queen of the Desert**' was a hit, while '**Ed Wood**,' the essentially true story of a straight cross-dresser who happened to be a bad director, was a critical success but bombed in middle America. Similarly, Samuel Goldwyn's '**Just Like A Woman**,' a heterosexual cross-dressing farce was also a financial underachiever. Meanwhile, **Lypsinka's** campy road tour entitled '**As I Lay Lip-synching**' packs them in while **Sarah Miles**' play '**Charlemagne**,' about a heterosexual husband who turns into a transsexual in front of his wife's eyes went dark after three weeks in equity waiver. The lesson is that cross-dressing is accepted by the masses when straight men are forced into it, not because they want to do it, while there is a ready market for gay Drag stories. **Dame Edna** works because **Barry Humphries**, although heterosexual himself, isn't playing a Drag Queen, he's playing the role of a comedienne, and when **Martin Lawrence** does **Sheneneh**, he too isn't portraying a Drag Queen, he's playing the role of a kooky female neighbor. This logic leads me to predict that '**Too Wong Foo, Thanks For Everything, Julie Newmar**,' the remake of '**La Cage**,' now to be Americanized and called '**Birds Of A Feather**,' starring **Robin Williams** and **The Kids In The Hall** movie will all be hits. Other genre movies to be on the lookout for will be the **Wigstock** and **Stonewall** documentaries.

Drag was the theme of **Fox Video's** recently released classic transvestite comedy, '**I Was A Male War Bride**' (1949), starring **Cary Grant**. In it, Cary portrays a luckless foreign-borne husband of an American Wac (played by the beautiful **Ann Sheridan**). Cary is forced into Drag or be left behind and wait for his American wife to send for him. It's partially based on the memoirs of **Lt. Henri Rochard**.

'**Priscilla**' premiered here in L.A. back in August at the famous dome-shaped **Cinerama Dome Theater**. A party followed at **The Palace on Vine in Hollywood**. According to **L.A. Times** writer **Bill Higgins**, writer-director



BABY JANE HUD-SIN TALKS ABOUT . . . WHATEVER

I wonder if you can guess who I am? Well, it's really not fair to make you guess. I'm Baby Jane Hud-Sin!! Yes, I am, I really am! And I'm here to tell you absolutely everything there is to know about the recent crop of Drag movies! How nice for you! Of course, I don't get much of a chance to go to a lot of movies, you know. I've been taking care of someone in my family who's sick. You know who I mean - that BITCH in the wheelchair, upstairs. Anyway, I don't want to talk about her!!! I don't want to talk about the bad things. I only wanna talk about the nice things, like 'Priscilla, Queen of the Desert.' Oh, I wish Daddy were here! He would have loved this movie! I know he would! They christen this huge, old, renovated school bus they call 'Priscilla.' Of course, if it were up to me, I would have christened it 'Blanche,' just so I could have an excuse to break a big bottle of champagne across her face! There she goes again! Miserable BITCH! Oh, SHUT UP! I was only kidding about the champagne! I mean, let's face it. Why should I waste a good bottle of champagne on her? Anyway, Terrence Stamp plays the lead Drag Queen. What a stretch! In this movie, he had on almost as much mascara as he did in 'Superman.' I've heard there's a new one coming out called 'To Wong Foo, Thanks For Everything, Julie Newmar.' It sounds like an autograph or something. I remember when people used to ask for my autograph. Nowadays, all they want me to sign is my sister's name on the checks to the liquor store! Speaking of Blanche, oh Blanche? Do ya know we got rats in the, oh, yeah, you folks have heard that one before. Anyway, To Wong whatever the hell it's called stars Patrick Swayze and Wesley Snipes as a couple of, you guessed it, Drag Queens!!! Also coming up is the remake of 'La Cage Aux Folles,' starring Robin Williams as Za Za! Daddy? Is that you? Oh, have to go now. I'm fixing dinner for my sister. I'm making her favorite - RAT-atouille!

Stephan Elliott said it was altogether fitting that his musical comedy about three drag queens traversing the Australian Outback premiered "in what looks like a giant bra cup." The benefit premiere performance raised money for **L.A. Shanti**, a non-profit organization that provides free emotional support counseling and education to people affected by HIV, AIDS and other life-threatening illnesses. My new Drag friend **Gutter Pup** who is on their Board of Directors, rang up a baker's dozen Drag Queens to ride in a big Priscilla-artwork-encrusted bus. When we disembarked onto the red carpet at the **Sunset Boulevard** entrance, we surrounded lead actors **Terrence Stamp** and **Guy Pearce** and director **Stephan Elliott** for the papparazzi. We filed into the theater, hammed it up for the regulars in the croud, then sat in our special section. Our contingent included **Eartha Madre**, **Bradley Pickelsheimer**, the **Phabulous Phyllis**, **Christine Amen**, **Renee Sauvage**, **Gutter Pup** and **Karen Dior**. Renee simply gushed when she bent Terrence's ear in the lobby and got her picture in the Times the next day shaking hands with him!

Soon after Priscilla premiered, all the local clubs jumped on the Priscilla bandwagon with lookalike parties. Dream analyst and **Highways** performance artist **Eartha Madre** accompanied me for **Temple's** party at the **Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel** in September. The event was free to anyone who dressed in Drag! There were so many wonderful costumes, including the ones worn by **Kitten Kaboodle**, **Renee Sauvage**, **Candy Ass**, **Jackie Beat**, designer **Shava**, **Crystal D'Canter**, **Wanda Lust**, **Eva Destruction**, **Candy Lane**, **Sabin** from **Gay Video Guide Magazine**, **Bobby Trendy**, **Lilly Monster**, **Afrodesia**, and **Ruby Tuesday** and his boyfriend **Kendall**. Entertainer **Gypsy**, Dragazine's Issue No. 6 cover story, was one of the celebrity judges. Almost everyone entered the Best Costume competition making the event last overtime. Star of **La Selva** at **Checca's Restaurant** on Tuesday's, **Constance** lipsynched to **Ima Sumak**, while **Temple's Miss Gay 1994 Linda** worked the east balcony as **Evita**, lipsynching '**Don't Cry For Me, Argentina**.' **Wanda Lust** won by a synthetic hair looking smashing in her silvery mini-dress and towering silver hairdo made from plastic piping.

Christine Amen invited a few local Queens to lend our Drag presence at

an **AIDS Project Los Angeles** function a month earlier, and I was there! **New York** party girl **Susanne Barch** conspired with **Playboy(!)** to stage a far out fashion show called **The Hoppening**, in honor of possible futuristic variations on the bunny suit. Most of us made it to the kick off pre-Hoppening garden party at the **Chateau Marmont** hotel on **Sunset**, but a few paid the \$250 entry for the actual event at the mansion that occurred weeks later. L.A.'s Drags meshed with Susanne's New York imports, including **Joey Arias** and **The Baroness**. **Holly Woodlawn**, **The Chanel Twins**, **Christine Amen**, **Mr. Dan** and **Paul V.** from **Dragstrip 66** and **The Plush Life**, **Gutter Pup**, **Eartha Madre** and **Karen Dior** represented the Southland.

With **Halloween** landing on a Monday night, the previous seven days held Drag potential as well. Although I seem to be in Drag all the time, my personal official partying began on the Friday night of the holiday weekend with a visit to **Dragstrip 66**, or as they called it '**Dragstrip 666, Night of the Blood Sucking Drag Queens.**' Saturday night my good buddy and **Axis Disco** host **Stephen Ford** did a pitstop at my apartment to borrow a dress and apply his face for the masquerade ball at **Axis**. After he left, I swooped down upon on **Lana Luster's** soiree around the corner and met the fabulous and enchanting **Baby Jane Hud-Sin**. I then tore myself away to pick up my friend **Ricky** for the **Red Dress Party** held in the hills above **Los Feliz**. **Ricky** consented to wear semi-demi Drag as it was his first time. We made our appearance, then hit the **Axis** club for an hour of dancing. Finally, I was discovered by **UCLA** film school student **David Gill** while he was videotaping the sidewalk scene in front of **Rage**. David cast me as a fairy godmother **Endora** type for his video project, and by the way, he got an A!

Halloween night itself was a blast on **Santa Monica Boulevard**! Although there were an almost overwhelming number of straight 'tourists' gawking at us, **West Hollywood** is safer than **Hollywood** and it's good that they can have a good time in our creative city and gay neighborhood! Non-costume wearing straights (and gays!) crowded out the flamboyant locals, but there were enough Drag Queens on parade to use up three rolls of film. I floated down the boulevard with my friends in costume, including **Crystal Blue Persuasion**, **Dame Ednot** and **Edwina K. Mart**. The best costume there out of the 90,000 estimated



Larry Edwards is a wonderful Tina Turner impersonator. He's performed all over the country, recently with Frank Marino in La Cage at the Riviera in Las Vegas and at Tattoo in Beverly Hills with Gypsy and a gang of other celebrity look alikes. He's also been on Vicki, Montel and Jane Whitney. Larry is from the South and began performing in Atlanta under the names Hot Chocolate and then later as Ultra Hot Chocolate. He's known for his fabulous Aretha Franklin and Patty LaBelle as well as his Tina. If you're at a show featuring him as Tina, he'll probably lipsync to Proud Mary, Better Be Good To Me or What's Love Got To Do With It. What advice does Larry have for upcoming performers? "If you're going to impersonate someone, watch their videos and read about them in magazines if they're not right there in town. Do a study on them to know their mannerisms. For Tina, I pull off this sexy, seductive, pouty look that she does. She also throws her hair and head over. It all depends on the character you want to play. You don't need dance lessons if you're going to be impersonating Dionne Warwick! She just stands there. Go for your dreams! I've been performing since 1973 when I started in Georgia doing disco medleys of Gloria Gaynor, Donna Summer, Grace Jones and such. I was a generic Drag performer and didn't specialize in impersonating celebrities. It took me a long time to make it to where I am today, and I'm still growing." Larry's looking to work as an actor either in or out of Drag, but for the near future he hopes to continue touring with Gypsy's current show, possibly around Europe in 1995! Eventually though, when his Drag days are behind him, he hopes to produce his own shows. To find out more about his performance schedule, contact the Bobby Ball Agency in Los Angeles.

people that choked the roadway was a giant anus with a rectal thermometer sticking out of it, so you can see the level of art that was present.

L.A. Times staff writer **John Glionna** and his trusty photographer **Robert** followed me around on a typical Saturday night in early December as I got ready to go to **Dragstrip 66**. He was working on a series about the local alternative cross-dressing scene, and the night before he hung out at **Club Illusions**. I looked as slutty as I could muster since it was a '**White Trash Christmas**' at **Dragstrip**. Robert took pictures while I dressed and painted and John asked me questions about my Drag experiences. Everyone at Drag Strip was gracious to the two reporters, including **Empira**, **Mr. Dan**, **Paul V.**, **Crystal D'Canter**, **Pagan Holiday**, **Misty Cologne**, **Mamma**, **Fiona**, **Sabra Summers**, **Latoya Latex**, **Kitten Kaboodle**, **Ida Wanna**, **Sugar Placebo**, **Karen Dior**, **Diamonelle**, **Cindy Snatch**, **Taylor Mayde** and a cast of hundreds.

I was there with my friend **Ken Dickmann** for the **Imperial Coronation XXIII, An Evening of Imperial Elegance, 'Beyond The Mind's Eye,'** celebrating imagination in the world of entertainment. It was held on a hot August 13th, 1994 at **Beverly Garland's Holiday Inn Hotel** in **Studio City**. The event was held to announce a new **Empress** and **Emperor** for the **XXIII Reign Imperial Court** of the **San Fernando Valley**, and also to give away very large scholarships to deserving students. The entertainment was grand, then we said a fond farewell to **Empress Regent Missy** and welcomed the talented **Alexis** as the new Empress. I had the pleasure of meeting **Jose Sarria**, aka **The Widow Norton**, **Imperial Empress XIV Chu Chu**, and bumping into **Danielle Alexis** from **JMPG**.

Speaking of bumping into people, it was so good to see **Kymerleigh Richards** at **Zine Scream '94**, put on by **A.R.T. Press**. **Kymerleigh** publishes **Cross-Talk Magazine**, and was there supporting the event as I was. **Sue Madre Magazine** publisher **Kitty Leukemia** was one of those on the guest panel discussing alternative market publishing.

The title of **Miss Tiara** was won by **Miss Tess Tosterone** at the sixth annual '**Battle for the Tiara.**' The sold out event was held Sunday, September 25th, and raised \$15,000 for **Aid for AIDS**, the leading provider of direct financial support

to people living with AIDS in Los Angeles County. Eight contestants, including my favorite **French Market** waiter **Ruby Tuesday**, vied for the title of Miss Tiara in four categories: bathing suits, talent, interview, and evening gown.

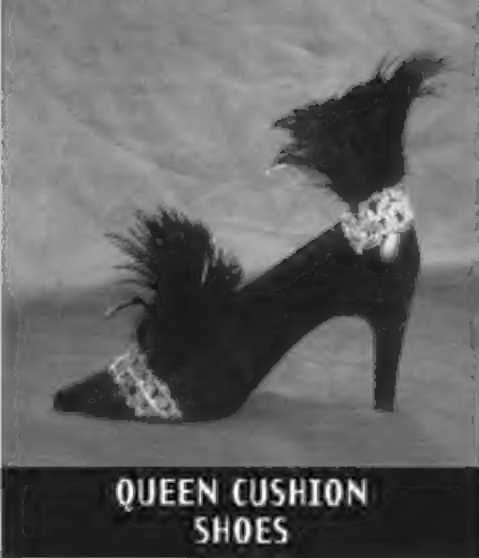
Congratulations to **Greg Halstead** for being one of **Los Angeles Times'** **Best Bets** in honor of his appearance in **'Barbra; The Symposium.'** His act was described by the Times as "a deconstruction of a cultural icon named Barbra." Greg had a long run that lasted for months and began in October at **L.A.'s Sunset Strip Comedy Store.**

Congratulations to **Chi Chi La Rue** for having the birthday party of the year, and for being inducted into the **Adult Video News Hall Of Fame.** It happened at January's **Consumer Electronics Show**, when the Adult Industry gathered to hand out their annual awards. Joining her on stage for the same honor was none other than **Karen Dior!** Also that night, a third Drag Queen got the wink when **Gender** won for best screenplay for her efforts on **'Idol Country.'** Keep up the great work, gentlemen! While I was there to soak up the latest in electronic gadgets, I caught **Frank Marino's** show at **Riviera Hotel's La Cage** and loved it as usual. The big surprise, however, was to see **RuPaul's** name and face plastered all over town. He's billed as **'The Queen of Las Vegas,'** and did a limited engagement at **The Sahara.** Friends said the show was great!

Everyone wished **Mark Ferguson** a well-earned retirement in September as he finally hung up his heels at the warm and friendly **Gold Coast** bar in **West Hollywood.** Mark dressed up every Sunday to tend bar and to help raise funds for local AIDS charities. The retirement party was aptly entitled **'Drag-A-Rama Blowout'** to encourage all his friends showed up in Drag to toast and roast him, and they did.

As a part of the **ECCE LESBO/ECCE Homo '94** festival in August, **Highways Gallery** in West Los Angeles exhibited the gender-bending works of photographer Jeffoto. The show was titled **'Boys Will Be Girls,'** featuring Drag Queens and others whose images blur the gender boundaries.

Hisses to the **Robocop** episode that aired in August where an **Evil Transvestite** concocts a corporate takeover and forces the fallen corporate officer into Drag, gloating all along! Congratulations to **Pagan Holiday, Greg**



FOR SHOES THAT ARE FIT FOR A . . . WELL, YOU KNOW! Ask most Drag Queens, Transvestites or Transsexuals and they'll tell you that a lot of time, energy and expense goes into those glamorous looks they pull off. You put together a lovely outfit, get your hair and makeup just right, only to have trouble finding shoes that both fit and look great. Well, Athena and Angel Rose are here to help you! They're a pair of lovely sisters who, with the help of their third sister Eve who has a way with graphics and logos, joined to create Queen Cushion Shoes. These shoes are gorgeous LADIES shoes, but using MEN'S shoe forms. A shoe form is what makes the shoe fit the foot, and a man's foot tends to be wider, flatter and larger than a woman's foot. Queen Cushion Shoes are available in MEN'S SIZES 8-14 (many styles also available in half sizes). "We use only the finest materials," Athena said, "such as leather uppers, linings and soles, and we offer a wide variety of styles and materials. Our shoes come in leather, suede, raffia, silk and sequins. We have pumps, spikes, boots, flats, ankle straps, sandals, open-toe, mules, evening shoes and wedding shoes. Leather shoe colors range from black, white, gold, silver, navy, brown, red, burgundy and tan, and our suede shoe colors range from black, orange, purple, green and fuchsia pink and more. We add extras such as beading, feathers, and fake fur trims. Boots, sandals and others styles are planned for some time in the near future." Keep up with their new shoe collections by adding your name to their mailing list. Please call 1-800-42COMFY (26639) or write them at 735 Delaware Rd., #124, Buffalo, NY 14223, for a free catalog, and the convenience, privacy and discretion of shopping at home. They also have a video shoe catalog available for \$9.95 in check or money order postage-paid. Listen to your feet! Give them what they've been asking for, before they go on strike, and then you saw it in Dragazine!

'Barbra' Halstead, Wanda Lust and **Crystal D'Canter** for appearing as 'atmosphere' on the **Roseanne** Halloween episode!!

A few of my Drag Queen friends have launched their own businesses, and I thought you should know about them. If you want to send your friend, lover or co-worker a hilarious Drag Queen for their special event, contact **Renee** at **Drag-Grams!** Call 213-934-2912, and hold on to your tiara! **Eartha Madre** wants to help you if you are at a turning point in your life. Do you need clarity on a project or problem? If you want to understand your blocks, get exposed to feedback, meet your "inner self" expert, make your Dreams/Goals come true and stop retreating from life, call 310-657-0889. The results are dreamy! **Crystal Crawford** says she's helping out to create a new BBS for cross-dressers. Set your modems to **818-701-LOVE** for a good time and a fully graphic interface.

Dragstrip 66 turned two years old in January, and held a **Glamour Pageant** in honor of the occasion. They also instituted a membership policy and higher prices for the lookie-loo/tourist/non-drag quotient who crowd out the beautiful people. Good! **Dragstrip 66:** Always the second Saturday of each month! At **Rudolpho's Restaurant** in **Silverlake.** Dress to impress, or just like a mess, you'll get in for less!

Finally, what did transvestism have to do with **Nazi Germany?** The subject came up in an **L.A. Times** article by **Michael Bronski**, author of **'Culture Clash: The Making Of Gay Sensibility'** (South End Press) when he interviewed historian **Klaus Muller.** **Mr. Muller** is a consultant for the **Holocaust Museum** in **Washington, DC.** One of his first projects was to make up for years of systematic exclusion of historical knowledge about the persecution of various minority groups during the late 1930s in Germany. According to the article, besides Jews, there were many other groups who were persecuted, including suspected homosexuals, the disabled, Gypsies, transvestites, alcoholics, people who didn't work enough by Nazi measures, unmarried women with children and abortionists. "If we allow persecution of one group, are other groups safe?" asks Muller. "The answer is - no, they aren't. This is a very clear message for us today: Basic human rights are for all people, or for no one." *Dg*

THE BEAT OF



DON'T MESS WITH MARY

THE NAME GAME

Drag inspired movies, and now Drag inspired music! Have you heard of the CD **"Don't Mess With Mary?"** Send \$9 in check to Aboveground Records, P.O. Box 2233, Philadelphia, PA 19103. For an E.P. (that's a vinyl record!) of **"Drag Queen"** by John-Fredrick, send \$5 in check to TRIP Records, 79 Franklin St., NY, NY 10013. Can these drag-inspired tunes be far behind?

A Hard Day's She-Male, Big She-Males Don't Cry, **Billy, Don't Be A She-Male**, Brandy, You're A Fine She-Male, **Eight She-Males A Week**, Fifty Ways To Leave Your She-Male, **Go Away Little She-Male**, Gypsies, Tramps & She-Males, **Hard Headed She-Male**, Honky Tonk She-Male, **How Deep Is Your She-Male**, I Want To Hold Your She-Male, **Johnny She-Male**, Midnight She-Male To Georgia, **Mrs. Brown You've Got A Lovely She-Male**, Papa Was A Rollin' She-Male, **Runaround She-Male**, She-Male Beneath My Wings, **She-Male In Disguise With Glasses**, She-Male Of The Pack, **She-Male Over Troubled Water**, She-Males Keep Fallin' On My Head, **Smoke Gets In Your She-Males**, That'll Be The She-Male, **That's What She-Males Are For**, Thank God I'm A Country She-Male, **The She-Male Sleeps Tonight**, These She-Males Are Made For Walkin', **Torn Between Two She-Males**, Walk Like A She-Male, **When A Man Loves A She-Male**, You Don't Bring Me She-Males, **You Don't Have To Be A She-Male (To Be In My Show)**, You're Having My She-Male.

Now here's something we hope you'll really like!

Garden Variety

Audry Quest
Audry Sponse
Bea Wildered
Consuela Canswallow
Coco Dependent
Gina Lola Goldenbridge
Holly Goheavily
Jean Pool
Kitten Kaboodle
Lucy Fur
Marianne Unfaithful
Molly Coddled
Sugar Placebo

Run Of The Mill

A.C. Deecce
C.I. Toldyouso
D.V. Eight
E.T. Callhome
F.A. O'Schwartz
I.P. Freely (CLASSIC, AUTHOR OF 'YELLOW RIVER')
J.E. Elleiloh
O.J. Didit
S.B. Deadly
U.L. Approved
X.Q. Zmee
Y.A. Duck

Twenty-seven year old artist Michael Fearnley is a British based graphic artist who creates large photo montages of Drags and other subculture exhibitionists. He's titled his most recent exhibit "Dragsville (All Froked Up)." Michael uses multiple and fractured images of outrageously done-up revelers that reverberate with giddiness and merriment present in the din of loud parties and night club scenes. "The Drag scene has always



YOU OUTTA BE IN PICTURES

produced a fantastic source of subject matter and inspiration," says the Drag-struck young man. "You only have to look at the makeup! I guess it makes it easier to produce art about people who are complete exhibitionists!" Michael accumulates photos from his collection and from others who contribute to his montages. The images reflect the underground scene from today and as far back as twenty years sometimes. "I'm trying to produce sixty pieces and I'm looking for a

fetish emporium, B&D workshop and a party environment. Hardly a month goes by without fun 'alternate lifestyle' events occurring, such as fashion shows featuring corsets and latex garments. Michael's collages are for sale of course, ranging in price and dimension. Speaking of House of Whacks, Purveyors of Pervy Products, we contacted owner Cindy DeMarco to get the inside scoop on this unusual art/performance space. "House of Whacks is a boutique, art gallery and most importantly, a converging point for perverts. The shop features the finest quality imported latex clothing (Ectomorph, Invincible, Latexa, Armory, etc.) and classic corsetry, (Axfords), from Europe and makes it available to perverts in the U.S.A. The gallery rotates fetish artists' work that has been passed up by other galleries because it's too risqué. Too risqué is a contradiction of terms at House of Whacks. We host pansexual pervert parties with a strict dress code; Latex, Leather, P.V.C., Kinky Drag, Glam, etc., no exceptions. Finally, there is somewhere to socialize that is safe, sane, consensual, heterosexual, homosexual and bisexual! "People who are 'camp' collectors and other interested parties should write to The House Of Whacks for more information about Michael's work, and a House of Whacks catalog too! Mail \$11 to House of Whacks, 1800 West Cornelia, Chicago, IL 60657, or call Cindy at 312-761-6969.



publisher to put them into book form," said the talented young artist. Michael arranged for a recent show of his work at The House Of Whacks, a gallery in Chicago. As the clever name implies, the space also serves as a



Photo: Bill Doregatti

A gratuitous photo of the gang at Shanti's Priscilla premier.

Wigstock. It started with a few drags, a few six-packs and a dawn-soaked downtown bandshell. "We were all boozing at the Pyramid club one night and we weren't ready to go home so we grabbed a few six-packs and ran over to Tompkins Square Park," recalls 'Stock organizer Lady Bunny.

Practically every notable person who's ever worn a wig, short of Burt Reynolds, has appeared at Wigstock, the annual Labor Day drag festival that brings love and hairpiece to New York's great, unruly outdoors. Despite the fact that the festival was moved from its original venue all the way to the end of Christopher Street, this year's all-day fest's 10th anniversary attracted more than 20,000 folks, according to Bunny.

When you stop to think about it, Woodstock and Wigstock, the two really do have an awful lot in common: Free Love. Dick. Lotsa hair. Not much shade. Psychedelics by the buckets load. Lotsa hair. Pussy. And organic sandwiches.

Lady Bunny's successful, all-day-long love festival was one of the best. Highlights of the eight-hour day: The Boybar Beauties, Mona Foot, Julia Sweeney as Pat, Goddess of Toilet Paper Trash Lahoma Van Zandt, larger than life singer India, real life rock n' rollers Misstress Formika & Deborah Harry, Michael West as Liza, Atlanta's Deaundra Peek, former Drag Talk reigning anchor Hedda Lettuce, La Da Dee Crystal Waters, the drunken and disorderly Dueling Bankheads, Candis Cayne kicking all the way up there and Miss CoCo.

RuPaul, if you were wondering, didn't sing all that much, but she did look soooo good! "I used to work these piers and now I own a great condo overlooking them!" she told her adoring fans.

1994's Wigstock X came and went with the same free love spirit as its relative, Woodstock.

Stay tuned for the Wigstock concert movie, coming soon to select theaters nationwide. It could turn out to be Paris is Burning without the pathos, Woodstock without the bad hair. See ya next year!

WigSTOCK '94



Photo: Carlo D'Amico



Photo: COURTESY PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL TREATMENT OF ANIMALS

Annual New York Festival
of Lights, Streaks & Tips
Turns Ten
by Eduardo Andino

THE "LADY" BUNNY PULLS IT OFF AGAIN!

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Captivator COLLEGE of Charm

Charm School Reunion

"What the hell happened to you?"



Charlotta Manure nearly spilled her gimlet as she opened the envelope from her alma mater. A reunion! So soon! It seemed like just the other day she had graduated from Captivator College of Charm. All those classes like "Poise" and "Handling One's Inferiors." The memories began to flood in: The Future Doyennes of Society Club, the school colors: Pink and Beige, cheering for the place setting team, cramming for the Back-Combing And Teasing exam, Accessorizing Class. Yecch! Charlotta had been an awkward, plump girl on a scholarship and had been cruelly ridiculed. It had been a long climb up to become the chic confection she was now. Those bitter schoolday memories are what had driven her to the top of society. But what to wear? Something absolutely fabulous and exorbitantly expensive, of course. Perhaps a Lacroix in the old school colors. Charlotta had a few friends from Captivator that she had to call - Nan Krapner, Denise Hole - and plot their return. Now she could rub their snotty little tract-home owning noses in her success!

Yes, lashes were curled, wigs were teased and boys were girls for the annual Muscle Sisters' Drag Ball. If you weren't there, don't worry. The High Brow Society announced the release of its "Charm School Reunion" commemorative video of the event! The video was shot on Saturday, October 22nd, 1994, at the Society's annual Drag Ball. The Ball, which took place at the Eureka Valley Gym, was attended by more than 500 boys in beehives, and raised in excess of \$11,000 for the STOP AIDS Project. "Tales of the City" co-star and special guest hostess, Chloe Webb, interviews many of the fabulous, entertaining and down right scary Captivator College of Charm Alumnus, and now this 30-minute video showcase produced by Titan Productions and duplicated by Chuck Holmes of Falcon Studios is finally available!

Attendees were asked to be prepared to answer brief questions on what they had been doing since Charm School Graduation. The majority of the tape consists of these brief interviews with the semi-celebrity greeters upon entering the premises. Among



PHOTOS: RAN BUDOR

the semi-celebrity greeters was our own Pagan Holiday who chomped down a few sound bites from the likes of: Grace Don't Fondelher, Odette, Josie Blanche, Mae Wee, Hedi Rekt, Judy, Dee Dee, Countess Jacqueline De La Fontaine, Crystal D'Canter, Candy, Lilly White Pussy, Lelani de Bora Bora, Francis Faginanni, Dolly, Hadda and Anita Mann, Chi Chi Clitoria, Doris Knife, Connie Caponni, Urania, Neptunia, Plutonia, Saturnia and Eartha, Secretia Lake (makes Women's Prison films now), Pee Pee Chanel, Lois de la Hoya Alejandro de la Cruz, Miss Dixie Peach Pitt, Lemon Sorbet and Tangerine Dream, Anne Margrut, Eileen Wayback, Lena Over, Georgina, Georgie, Georgette and Georgia, Missie Ashworth Longwirth Dobson, Sharon Secrets, Tiffie Tureen, Barbie Barkowitz, Cherrie Flambay, Cheryl Tease (President of the Local Chapter of BWWH - Bitter Women Without Husbands), Brandie Black, Tanya Hyde, Carla Scarlotta, Miss Aligned, Antoinette Chevy, Dusty Rag, Daphne Grace Whatsakoona, Sasha Slut (from a small European nation called

Ispitanya), Julianne Carrots, Kasha (left school to form the Tennis Hag Legends Tour), Miss Gay Iowa '93, Nina from Planet Zeena, Honey Pleshette, Ruby Rhinestone, Ima Blank, Miss Golden Showers, Brandy Devine, Penny Trating, Uretha Discharge, Carrie, Camilla Cardinalli, Ivana Likkit, Ivana Cocktail, Ivana Crotch, Ivana Cartier, Ivana Makeover and Ivana Getin, Mary Alice, Heather Locklips and last but not least, Consuella Canswallow!

By the way, besides Chuck Holmes/Falcon Studios, members of The Highbrow Society and Titan, thanks go to Piedmont Boutique, Events by Design and Glenn Bauer/The Edge, The Midnight Sun, Foxy Lady, Short Run Duplication and Undercover who also helped to put this event on and/or get the video out.

For a copy or two of this fabulously funny video and to support a worthy cause, please send \$20 per VHS copy in check payable to STOP AIDS Project, C/O The High Brow Society, 121 Hancock Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. You'll be glad you did!



Lana
Auster

THE PRINCESS WITH A PENIS

by Lois Commondenominator



Creating a new personality opposite to the image the public knows initially is the trademark of adult video's newest rising star, Lana Luster. Erotic film is not new to Lana as she appeared in some films under the name Vince Harrington, but just by chance, moved on to become one of the leading transvestite actors in such films as 'She-Male Voyager,' 'Transsexual Boulevard,' and 'As Time Goes Bi.' She just won a Gay Erotic Video Award (presented by Gay Video Guide magazine) as Best Gender Bender for her performance in 'The Bi-Valley.' Originally from the Windy City of Chicago, the Italian/German Lana has been in Los Angeles for over a decade. For her first and exclusive interview, Lana entertained Dragazine on a summer's night with a snack of prosciutto and melon that went down with champagne as we sat around her West Hollywood pool-side apartment and entered the world of Lana Luster.

Who came up with the name Lana Luster?

I did. The Lana came from Lana Turner, one of my favorite actresses, and Luster actually ended up as the result of a misspelling. It was supposed to have been Lester, like Vicki Lester, but everyone seemed to like Luster so I kept it.

Tell us what your current claim to fame is for those readers who might not be familiar with your work.

How to put it? My current fame to fame seems to be remaking classic motion pictures into transsexual pornography.

How do you become an adult star?

Sometimes even I wonder. No, there really isn't a studio system because there are a lot of independent producers. It's a very small town, and usually by knowing one producer, you know another and another. I don't have an agent, but some of the performers I know do, especially the boys. There aren't many agents anymore. One or two local ones mainly, who's names I won't mention or who's reputations I won't mention. There are a couple of rather more reputable agents out in Denver who represent Cort Stevens and Bo Summers. One of the producers was lamenting to me just the other day that he was finding it more and more difficult to cast

films in Hollywood. Almost everyone who's anyone has fled Hollywood. I don't know the word on the street, but I would tend to think they leave because of the fast living, and it's such a disposable industry, partly due to the volume of work that comes out, partly due to the nature of the business. It becomes such a party, and you end up partying a lot. There is definitely a fast crowd, and it's very easy fall into it, especially if you are younger. When you are young, it's very easy to have your head turned by a great deal of traveling, and a great deal of sudden attention, fame or infamy if you will. I personally don't know a lot of nineteen and twenty year olds that can deal with walking into a party or a restaurant or bar and having absolutely everyone there know who they are, know what they look like with all their clothes off, and even know what they look like when they're making love. It's very hard to keep your perspective.

How did you get started in the business?

I owe my start in the business actually to Karen Dior. She was directing a film called 'Transfigured,' and called me up one day desperately in need of talent. Apparently, the available pool of actresses for these films is quite small. I had never done one of these movies before, so we just hoped that it would work out. We through caution to the wind, and the next thing I knew, there we were.

If you were given the opportunity, would you be in the more kinky films?

It's really not in my nature. I have been asked by some of the directors from Bizarre if I would be interested in doing some Dominatrix scenes, and although I've been typecast playing very strong, hard-boiled women, it's just not in my nature. In order to act it, you have to be in touch with something in your own nature, although they say you don't have to be an axe murderer to play one, but you have to understand what it is to be so angry at someone that you could kill them. Unfortunately, attractive men are my biggest weakness, and I just can't bring myself to abuse them, even in pretend

Is there a distinction between 'erotica' and 'adult'?

I like to think that it's all adult. The erotica is the good stuff that's entertaining as well as arousing, and the pornography is the cheap junk.

Tell us about what Drag means to you.

There is a distinction between a Drag Queen and a Female Impersonator. A Drag Queen tends to go a little more over the top. A Drag Queen is more likely to run down the street in a wig made of clothesline and a mini-dress made of rubber beach thongs, as in that movie 'Priscilla, Queen of the Desert.' A female impersonator will try to walk in somewhere looking exactly like Susan Hayward or Joan Crawford. They were always very elegant, very well-dressed in public, and always carried themselves like ladies. They always behaved like what I thought a movie star would behave like.

Your public wants to know if the person they see on the screen anything at all like the person they would meet in private.

A bit. In private, I'm much more shy, and on screen, the roles I tend to play are extremely strong women. Very much like Hayward, Crawford, Barbara Stanwyck and Bette Davis. These are strong and independent types. In my personal life, I'm really not like that.

Do you write any of your own dialog?

I've been allowed very nicely to make suggestions every now and then, especially if it's a take off on something that I've seen and am familiar with. In the transsexual films, I don't see how you can avoid camp humor, so those are my favorite lines. It's always fun to have lots of histrionics, like in the drab scene of 'She Male Voyager,' where she's ranting about being unattractive, and her niece is making fun of her. She goes on and on with, "Oh you like making fun of me! It's fun to make fun of me!" In 'Transsexual Boulevard,' the take off that Karen Dior directed on 'Sunset Boulevard,' there was a fun sequence of dialog that begins, "Haven't you been

replaced by younger transsexuals with real tits?" So my character who plays the counterpart to the aging diva says, "We didn't need tits, we had faces!" That was written by Mr. Dan from Dragstrip 66. It's a wonderfully clever script.

You don't get seen on the street very often, or at public appearances. Why?

Public appearances are very taxing. In fact, a few months ago, I was signing for one of the companies at a booth in the Adult Video section of the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, and I was so totally drained by the experience that I almost considered retiring. I just felt like a fish out of water. I just don't deal well in public. Someone I'm very close to, shall we say, Vince Harrington, is completely the opposite in those types of situations.

Who is Vince Harrington?

Well, I suppose you could say either we're brother and sister, or kissing cousins, or something like that. Fraternal twins, there you go! We share similar features, and sometimes similar problems. I know we both lament the fact that it's difficult to find suitable partners for some of our scenes.

For our readers who haven't seen Lana Luster's films, Lana is a beautiful and talented actress, but also performs with a very aesthetically pleasing and dimensional . . . tool. Off the record, the big ones don't hurt any more than the average ones, do they?

I think the big ones scare people more, especially if you're the one that has to bend over. Anyway, Lana is very shy, while Vince will go anywhere. Throw a party and Vince will come. He has stripped, he has done jack-off shows. I envy him in that he has very few inhibitions.

Are you very close with the other Drag performers in town?

There is a bit of a clique or sorority. I'm a bit on the fringes of it. Usually, if something is going on, they're always very kind to invite me, but then I'm very shy about going out and what makes it worse is I just can't seem to get myself to step foot out of doors without a proper escort. Since I'm not dating anyone, I just don't go, and I won't go stag since it's utterly unladylike.

Describe your most favorite outfit.

My favorite outfit was probably the one that I wore at a very rare appearance when they threw the party for 'Transsexual Boulevard' at The Revolver. I felt I had to go since Karen had been so kind to cast me in the part, and it was practically written for me. It really would have been awfully rude if I hadn't shown up. Yes, it was a nice little strapless black 1950's style cocktail dress, sequinned bodice with a

Photo © Gary F. B. for Do. Trans.

Photo © Gary F. B. for Do. Trans.



flaring tulle skirt. It had a beautiful chiffon scarf trailing over the shoulder and down the back. Someone commented that the whole ensemble looked very Susan Hayward.

Do you keep up with fashion?

Not so much modern fashion. I don't think any of the films that I've been in called for it, and the studios are very good about providing my wardrobe.

What do you like to wear at home?

It depends entirely on whether I'm alone or not. Unfortunately, I'm alone most of the time. I have to say that the at home wardrobe is not much racier than a pair of silk pajamas, sort of Carole Lombard. I'm afraid that I'm very stuck in the 1930s and 40s. I am a hopeless romantic.

What's your sign?

Aquarius, early February. You could send the birthday greetings a little bit before Valentine's day and you'd be just about right. I read the horoscope in the papers every day just to see how accurate they are. I've dabbled a little bit with Tarot cards now and then. I'm not very good with them yet, but I've read a few friends cards and done surprisingly interesting readings. In fact, I just got a new set a while back when I was vacationing in New Orleans at the Voodoo Museum. The thing that struck me that was so funny at this museum was what was playing on their in-house tape system. It was this sort of African jungle rhythm tape, and I'm standing there listening and thinking. I know this music. I know why I know this music! This was the same instrumental music that they were using in one of the sex scenes in 'A View To A Thrill' with Rex Chandler, when they were having sex on a chin-up bar.

You're very athletic. Tell us about your health regimen.

Friends tease me because I generally eat like a bird. Everything in the refrigerator is no salt or low salt, low fat or no fat. I splurge once in a while with dessert. When I'm really being frivolous, I have chocolate. I'm a terrible chocoholic. I work out at the gym a good three times a week. I try to do mostly running and weight training, and some swimming.

Do you have any makeup tips, or use any special moisturizers or other lotions?

Less is more. There's nothing worse than looking like a barn that's just gotten a fresh coat of paint! I'm not going to give away any trade secrets, but it's true, I'm fairly hairless. Complexionwise, cleanliness is always extremely important. One should absolutely never ever sleep with your makeup on. Always cleanse thoroughly. I firmly believe in a good cleansing cream, a good apricot scrub and a good clay mask facial twice a week. It draws out those

impurities and tightens up those pores. I don't have much trouble with moisturizer because I have incredibly oily skin. You don't have to use expensive brands. The idea is to keep your skin as clean as possible, especially when you live in a big city with all the smog and grit and everything in the air. I use a tanning salon in the Winter, only because I'm very fair skinned, and if I don't have some color, I get so incredibly pale that friends start wandering around asking if I'm ill when I'm not. It's not a good thing to walk into a party or a restaurant and have someone go, "Are you alright? You look sick." So I thought, well, just enough color to not look like something from a White Sale is probably a good idea.

Did you go to acting school, or tried other avenues of show business?

I've been on every avenue you can think of! I majored in theater in college. I made a few inroads into, oh now, how can I say this without sounding insulting? Alright, I won't use the words 'legitimate show business,' because I think that's insulting to the adult industry. Let's just say I have made some inroads into more conventional show business areas, but a girl has to eat and pay her rent. Something like five lines once a year on somebody's sitcom doesn't do it.

You have certain opinions about directing. Have you ever had the ambition to direct yourself?

Somewhere back in my mind. I've even written one or two scripts, but I haven't really taken the time to do anything about promoting them. While I won't say who, someone in town is reading one of my scripts right now, and I'm in the process of working on another. I think sometimes that I would like to direct, then I see what some of the directors or producers either go through or are made to go through or make themselves go through, and then I think again, maybe not. Timing, casting difficulties, problems on the set are all made worse if you don't have the luxury of a good size budget, and it seems to me that's the way the industry is going. The really glory days of the high budget leisurely shoots are pretty much gone. The bad ones don't take long enough. Some of them take only one day, and sadly to say, there are an awful lot of those. It isn't just any one company. It's just like the old Hollywood days where you had the A picture and B pictures and C pictures, and every company does them. When you start getting into C's and D's, those are the ones being shot in a day, and I just don't see how you can get anything done worthwhile in a day. I'm sure it fills a space in the market and it fills a need for that kind of stuff. I, myself, have worked in many of them.

Do you ever get to have input into who you'll be doing a scene with?

I would say the best producers and directors with a

decent budget often will consult me. If you're going to film a scene with someone, if there isn't some chemistry there to begin with, you're in for a very bad day. You can usually tell if there's chemistry on meeting. One of my favorite scenes was in 'As Time Goes Bi,' with a fellow by the name of Danny Kamin, whom I had never met up to that time. Normally, I must say I tend to prefer tall blonds, and he is actually rather dark. In fact, I think we were talking before the shoot and he told me he had some Aztec blood in him which makes him quite exotic. He also has the most fabulous set of abdominal muscles I have ever seen. You could wash your hosiery on them, they're that rippled. I, of course, was immediately interested, and very, very turned on. We had a marvelous time and did a marvelous scene. There again, that sort of thing is such a luxury. If you really want to do, it's terribly important when you're casting people to be aware of their likes and dislikes.

Are there things that you've been asked to do that you wouldn't do?

I personally have not been asked to do anything that I wouldn't do. Most of what goes on in the industry is what we call 'vanilla' sex, due to restrictions, problems, community standards. If you want your film to be successful, it has to be available and appealing to a broad enough audience. The way to do that is by making it the least controversial as possible. I must say that I've never met anyone who was asked to do something that they didn't want to do.

Do you insist on a lot of foreplay?

I wish I could insist on it! It would be nice. I love foreplay! I love a good kisser. A man who understands good foreplay can make a scene absolutely fly. I remember one of the best kissers I worked with was a gentleman named Chad Lowe. We were in a film called 'Trans America.' Chad Lowe is a very nice, tight, compact blond gentleman. I think he spent some time in the military, probably a Marine. Besides being a great kisser, he was incredibly strong. We managed to get ourselves into some very athletic positions, and I remember there was one moment during shooting, I must have been sitting in his lap, sort of doubled over backwards into space, and he had me in his arms. He leaned down into my ear and said, "Don't worry, I won't drop you." Well, I could feel his arms around me they were like steel bands. I was not the least bit worried that the man was going to drop me. I knew better! You know when you're in a strong man's arms. It was very nice. I don't know if times have changed and romance, foreplay and kissing are important, or if it's been over the past few seasons the incredible influx of gay for pay boys.

What do you mean, 'gay for pay boys'?

They are the really straight boys who act in gay videos just for the money. I don't know how straight

they can be, but I've met them at parties and probably even worked with one or two, and they're all perfectly wonderful men. People shouldn't have to be labeled, or label themselves. I see absolutely nothing wrong with enjoying those men and women and admitting it. What makes it difficult is when you're trying to do an extremely intimate situation with someone, and they won't kiss, they won't reciprocate, they won't perform any foreplay of any kind, and in essence just stand there like stone. I know Stanislavski says that any good actor should be able to make love to a chair. Well, making love to a chair isn't quite the same as having sex with it. It's extremely hard to get aroused and have sex with someone who looks as though they'd rather be out playing golf.

Speaking of sex, how do you prepare for these scenes?

If I have time, I always abstain from sex for a while. I take Vitamin E anyway. I take enough vitamins to choke a horse! I find ginseng helpful for energy.

What about stamina on the set? Have you ever had to keep it up for hours?

Only on the bad ones. It can vary, and you can and do take little breaks. It just depends on if the scene is going well, and you have some simpatico with your partner, it's almost effortless. If there isn't, and it just really isn't anyone's fault, if you just don't mix chemically, there's nothing you can do about it.

Is Lana always a top, or does she switch-hit?

Lana is technically a top. I suppose if I were more versatile it would probably help my career a bit. Unfortunately, I'm actually rather tiny back there, and when I'm faced with one of these enormous porno stars, it makes it terribly difficult. I was doing a picture with Mark Andrews, who is simply a doll and a very handsome man, and a very skilled top. We were doing a picture together called, 'The Bi-Valley,' which was quite fun. We had our scene together and I was so looking forward to working with him. We had a very nice scene, but I don't think I was able to sit down for several days. He's such a total pro and such a nice man that he persevered and we got through the scene. He's not a small man, and as I am a bachelor girl, I don't get a steady beau to practice with, and the idea of sitting at home alone with a dildo is really quite repellant.

Do you have any advice about how to overcome a sore bottom? I'm sure you've inflicted a few yourself in your day.

So I've been told, although I've also had one or two of the boys comment that I am actually very gentle. I certainly try to be. I have my moments, but when you wield a weapon like mine, you don't intend to hurt anybody but you sometimes do. I suppose if you're going to be a bottom, one of the best things

Photo Courtesy: McSue Studios



to do would be to get in some practice, safely of course. Lay in a good stock of rubbers and go for it.

That's very important that you mention safer sex and rubbers. What is considered safe by professionals performing in a video is not necessarily what is considered safe at home.

Any time that you're dealing with any sort of sex, I've always felt whether it be anal or vaginal, I say use a condom. I'm very angry at most of the straight industry for the lack of the use of condoms in most of their films. I know everyone keeps taking their blood tests, and in order to do a straight film these days, you must show up on the set with a recent blood test result. That's all very well and good. I still don't think anyone should have to be put through that risk, or should have to put someone else through that risk. Why do it if you don't have to?

A blood test to me just means something that day came out negative. The next day it could change.

Unfortunately with the unpredictable incubation period from person to person of this virus, that's just it. Although I'm sure that a negative test is a very good sign that your immune system is functioning normally and that you are probably alright, why take the risk? I think I have to blame some of the producers and most of the public. I'm told that the straight public won't let the films be made because they won't buy the films showing men using condoms. I think it's shocking and a shame on them. It doesn't seem to have hurt the gay market at all in the long run. I sat down and thought about all the spermicide they used at first instead of condoms in the very beginning of the crisis, and I don't know where all those performers are today. I hope that a lot of them are not gone, but I don't see them working. Almost everyone that's been working regularly with the protection of condoms is still here.

Is Lana what you do every day, or is she just a creation for these movies? When you're not Lana, do you ever dress up as Lana off the set to attract suitors?

I have a 9 to 5 office job. I'm afraid Lana only exists on the set.

Who rents these movies? Who are they marketed to in your estimation?

I'm told that the major market for these films is, believe it or not, straight men. Mind you, I have not been able to run into one single straight man, one single bisexual man, and especially any gay men that will even confess to having ever seen or watched these things, and yet I'm told they're very popular and sell very well.

What is the allure of straight men to gay men?

I don't understand it. Straight men should only be

attractive to straight women. I think there's something demeaning about gay men who chase after straight men, as though they're better or more powerful or more sexual. Even the idea of advertising for 'straight acting' partners is a terrible prejudice within our own community. I must admit, however, that I am very attracted to a man's looks, which is very shallow of me, but there has to also be something under that shell too.

Is it difficult to find leading men in your movies?

I think there is a stigma attached to acting in these 'trannie' movies, and that if a gay actor who's known in gay videos does one, his other career is immediately over.

Is there a role that you would like to portray that you haven't yet?

It would be nice if we could do a good take off on 'Gone With The Wind.' I'd love to see what I could do with Scarlett O'Hara. I'm sure I was a Southern Belle in a former life, and if I ever settle down with a husband, I've always thought that I'd like nothing more than to run a bed and breakfast in the French Quarter of New Orleans.

What haven't I asked you that you want to tell me?

That's a tough one. I think observations on the industry. I know we're always fighting about being respected, and no matter what anyone might think, the adult entertainment industry is as viable as almost any other entertainment. The thing is, we're always asking for respect, and yet I've seen so little respect go on among ourselves. I've seen so much infighting and backstabbing. It's just like what you hear about in mainstream Hollywood. Sadly, a great deal of substance abuse goes on too. I will confess to an occasional weakness of champagne. I think we of all people should be more careful and take better care of ourselves and of each other, especially since we're in an industry where your day to day work involves a certain degree of health risk. *Dz*

LANA LUSTER VIDEOGRAPHY

Transfigured

Transamerica

She's The Boss

As Time Goes Bi

Lady Dick

The Best Little He-She House in Texas

The Bi Valley

She Male Dictation

Trannie Dearest

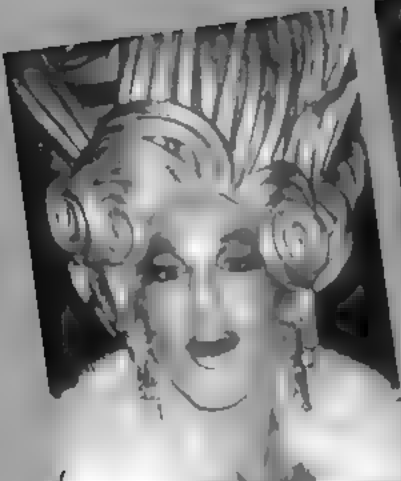
She-Male Voyager

TV Evangelist

The Princess With A Penis

Transsexual Boulevard

Queens From Outer Space.



Wanda Lust



Eartha Madre



Eva Destruction



Enotha Tamale



The...



Edwina K. Marx



Dame Edwist



Great Attitude!



Mary Popping



Sabre



Marilyn



Crystal Del'ante



Gina Lohrman



Diamonelle



Divinity...



Candis Cayne



Mona Nary



Bobby Trendy



Divinity...



KODAKUE

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Chanel Twins



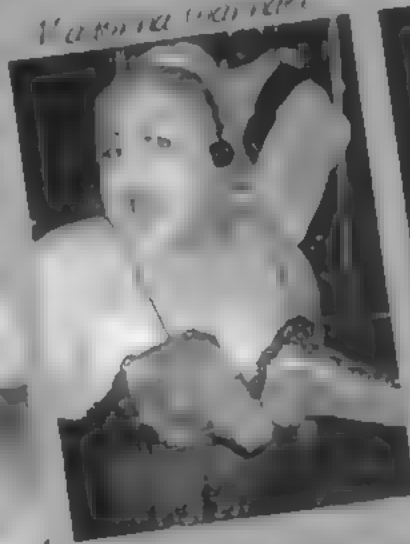
Summer 83

Lois Commondenominator

Farol Ann O. May

May 1981 in 1982

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2 1 2 - 2 4 2 - 6 4 4 9

AN OUTRE ENTREE INTO
THE PARA-RIDICULOUS
HISTRIONICS
OF DRAG DIVA

Ethyl

A True Story
by Joe E. Jeffreys

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"For those of you who wanted a classic drag act -- I'm sorry. But I'll do a little something for you so you won't be disappointed." Two wigs teased and ratted together to form a one-foot-high mountain of hair, pump-me-up-and-fuck-me patent leather stiletto heels supplementing the acrylic hair six more inches, the six-foot-two-inch (natural height) Ethyl Eichelberger teeters onto the stage like a doomed skyscraper in a B-grade 1970s earthquake disaster movie. Accordion in tow, he frantically gestures and articulates his way through thirty seconds of the drag canon: "So here goes, classy drag act: Is that a gun in your pocket or are you just happy to see me what a dump blanche what a dump there's no business like show business the calla lilies are in bloom again falling in love again on the good ship lollipop stop in the name of love happy birthday mister president can we talk diamonds are a girls best friend of course I just farted darling do you think I always smell like this o Nannine I want to be alone." Then, a pause and a glance at the audience through four pairs of false eyelashes and enough eye shadow to blind Ann Miller. "I will not do Judy She's sacred. You can do Judy -- and your little dog too!"

Ethyl Eichelberger has begun his performance of **Minnie the Maid**. Attired in a red tutued, min[n]i[e] skirted French maid ensemble, mandatory fishnet stockings and jewelry of truly profound proportions, Eichelberger will command attention for the next forty five minutes of this solo performance commingling talents and



atrocities that **Village Voice** critic Ross Wetzsteon surmised as an "eye averting embarrassment." However, Eichelberger's maximalist theatre of the kitchen sink -- not everything **but** the kitchen sink; rather everything **plus** the kitchen sink -- invariably surpassed its press. Eichelberger's impact upon experimental theatre as a whole has been labeled "indisputable." Of course it was eye averting.

Author, director, and performer of thirty-two plays, Eichelberger (1945-1990) can be seen as a seminal figure of queer theatre within the off-off Broadway movement. Firmly rooted in the traditions of post-war American experimental performance and conventions, his work also pushed the parameters of better known forms, like those of the Ridiculous Theatrical Company.

Born James Roy Eichelberger, July 17, 1945, to Amish Mennonite parents in Pekin (The City of Marigolds), Illinois (Land of Lincoln), he grew up surrounded by heartland popular culture.

A veteran of folk performative art forms by the time he graduated to fifth grade, he was

At Pekin High, home of the politically-oblivious Pekin Chinks, Jimmy was well groomed to become the star of the drama department and emerge as an overachiever. Under the direction of his beloved high school drama teacher Edith Harrod, he appeared in many productions.

Edith Harrod recognized the germs of talent and set out to help her star student land a college scholarship to Galesburg,

James to leave Knox and spend his time more constructively at an acting conservatory. To this end, Chase aided James in securing an ABC-TV scholarship for study at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York City.

During his study at the Academy, James met fellow student John Brockmeyer. Brockmeyer had begun moonlighting with a newly formed downtown group known as the Ridiculous Theatrical Company. Under the direction of Charles Ludlam, the group had just splintered from John Vaccaro's Playhouse of the Ridiculous after "artistic differences" arising during rehearsals of Ludlam's second play for the Vaccaro troupe **Conquest of the Universe**. It was the summer of 1967 and Eichelberger was on the verge of a transformative experience.

Invited by Brockmeyer to attend a rehearsal, Eichelberger was stupefied by what he witnessed. He describes his first time

I'll never forget it; no one ever forgets their first meeting with Charles [Ludlam]... [It was] in this beautiful loft on Great Jones Street. I didn't really know who anyone was, but it was fun. I just watched what was going on. This very short, balding man with long hair would jump up whenever it was his turn, do his rehearsing, and then, when he finished, just sit down. One time, however, he jumped up and said, 'Wait a minute.' He ran to this stuff piled at the back of the loft, picked out a piece of chintzy green satin, and wrapped it around himself. When he turned around, he was the great actress Nora Desmond. No makeup, nothing, just this piece of cheap material. It was incredible, a total transformation. It was one of the most amazing things I had ever seen And it changed my life

As Eichelberger became a social fixture of rehearsals and performances, absorbing all he saw around him, Ludlam formally invited him to become part of the company. He refused "I wasn't ready." Instead he followed the course presented him through his training at the American Academy.

Upon graduation in 1967, James secured a position as an actor with Adrian Hall's Trinity Square Repertory Company in Providence, Rhode Island. Living in a 1940s streamlined trailer, Eichelberger served as the company's lead character actor for the next seven years. While there he performed over forty roles for the company.



Photo: Mary Eichelberger's Restroom-SF

amply prepared to undertake the demands of his first drag role. A forward-looking teacher cast him as the witch in the class play **Hansel and Gretel**. Eichelberger recalled, "My mother made me a black crepe paper dress and a big black pointed hat. She put pink yarn on it for hair. I've never recovered." The Middle-West of the 1950s was unwittingly preparing him for a career in avant-garde theatre.

Illinois' Knox College. Freshman year he would portray the title roles in both **Oedipus and Hamlet**. The campus newspaper, **The Knox Student**, noted of his Hamlet, "truly impressive... the play belonged primarily to Mr. Eichelberger."

Rowland Kimberly Chase, director of **Hamlet**, also recognized talent when he saw it. Chase advised the now more soberly named

Despite his success and secure niche, the Trinity experience began to wear thin. "I started seeing actors get so technically proficient, and bored, that they would start walking through their performances. I thought, I've got to get out of here. I saw myself where I could do that too if I wasn't careful."

During time off from Trinity, he frequented New York City flopping with his friend Brockmeyer. Their renewed friendship drew Eichelberger back into the periphery of the Ridiculous Theatrical Company and reinvigorated his admiration of the group's work.

On one of these visits to New York City, he wandered into the Lincoln Center Library for the Performing Arts and heard by chance an original Edison wax cylinder recording of Sarah Bernhardt in the role of Racine's **Phaedre**. It was the early 1970s and once again a transformative experience was about to occur

It changed my life. I listened to it over and over. Everytime it stopped I pressed the button again. I figured it was time to go in another direction. I tried to go back to the nineteenth century, to that 'declaiming,' to where you take human speech and you take it one step further.

Inspired by the Ridiculous explorations, Eichelberger now initiated work on his own theatrical experiment. Transfixed by the Bernhardt recording of **Phaedre**, and as of yet afraid to write his own words, Eichelberger created a cut and paste adaptation of Robert Lowell's translation of **Phaedre**.

Dubbing the work **Phedre**, Eichelberger first performed his adaptation late nights for the cast and crew at Trinity. Through the encouragement he received from these and subsequent nocturnal private performances, Eichelberger garnered the courage to attempt his shenanigans in New York City. Networking with his Ridiculous acquaintances, he began to perform **Phedre** (1972) in various lofts. Further, he began slowly to infiltrate the newly emerging East Village club performance scene.

By now completely enraptured with New York City, the Ridiculous Theatrical Company and the opportunity to explore his own work through the club scene, Eichelberger left Rhode Island in 1973 and moved into a Lower East Side store front. With little furniture, the store front over the years evolved into his own personal theatrical production house crammed with costumes, sets, props and memorabilia.

Going to beauty school by day and appearing with the Ridiculous and in various club gigs at night, James' work on the fringe, and especially with Ludlam, brought about major changes and confirmations in his thinking. Having never identified with his given name and reeling from the impact of Ludlam, in 1975 he changed his name. "Only you have the right to decide what you are called. You can go along with what your

was emulating. It was him that I wanted to be. I felt all along that I wanted to be in his company, and I was, and I kept wanting more. Finally I realized that I wanted to be like him. I wanted to be this person who put on his own shows."

Ludlam provided Eichelberger with the element which hindered him from becoming "this person who put on his own shows." "He gave me the strength to write.



Photo: courtesy E. C. HERRIDGE'S FIRST JUNE SF

parents name you but ultimately, you decide who you are even down to your name." The new name's gender ambiguity evoked the great performing Ethels' of the past-- Barrymore, Merman and Mertz -- not to mention images of powerful petroleum products.

By 1977, Eichelberger realized that "it wasn't his [Charles Ludlam's] company that I

in school and college I let myself be browbeaten into thinking that I couldn't write because my sensibility is off the wall." Newly confident of his writing ability, Eichelberger now set out on a solo writing and performing career, supporting himself through hair dressing. Moreover as Ethyl noted, "I wanted to play the great roles, but who would cast me as Medea?"

***** Work

"I'm a storyteller and a performer. I'm just looking for a story to tell. And I want to do **grand** characters," noted Eichelberger of his body of work. The thirty-four operas constituting his oeuvre look to the great women of history and literature as their jumping off points. Cascading an encyclopedic knowledge of theatre and a love of reading and research, each opera gathers all the known and little known facts concerning its title character or literary basis and spews them forth in dizzying Victorian rhymed cadences and ear-averting alliterations. As Ludlam, Eichelberger's mentor, described the Ridiculous methodology, "Basically the catch phrase of my movement would be 'virtuoso maximalism,' enemy of minimalism." Ludlam's work presented what he called "the whole panoply of creativity." Likewise, the work of his disciple illustrates that going too far simply means you haven't gone far enough.

Paraded on nearly every space that might pass as a stage in New York City from 1973-1990, the works average fifteen typed pages in length. Working with classical source material, Eichelberger aspired to tap into universal themes. Adaptations of "traditional" material, his scripts are "stories that for thousands of years were passed down by word of mouth, until they became archetypes, universal stories everyone can relate to. I think that for the theatre that's the ideal, but I don't know if I'll ever get there. I start with grand ideas but as I write them they become very personal."

Nefert-iti (1976), the first play penned solely by Eichelberger and performed in an original Fortuny gown once owned by burlesque star Lily St. Cyr, demonstrates how a classical universal story could spin out the trials of being a queen with a personal twist. An excerpt from the performance text reads

*It's a lot of hard work being a queen
And there are factions out there who
don't like what I represent -- tough
noogies! I have a right to be here
'Don't do that here. Don't be a queen,'
they say. The kinder ones tell me that I
transcend queenery. They let me know
they'll overlook my queenly failings
and benignly be so gracious as to
accept me as one of them. It's true,
most people would rather queens
should stay under wraps so to speak.
Hide! Deny your feminine soul! Being a
queen frightens them. But I am a*

*queen, a beautiful one at that. I know
who I am. Ms. Marcia and I share the
same madness*

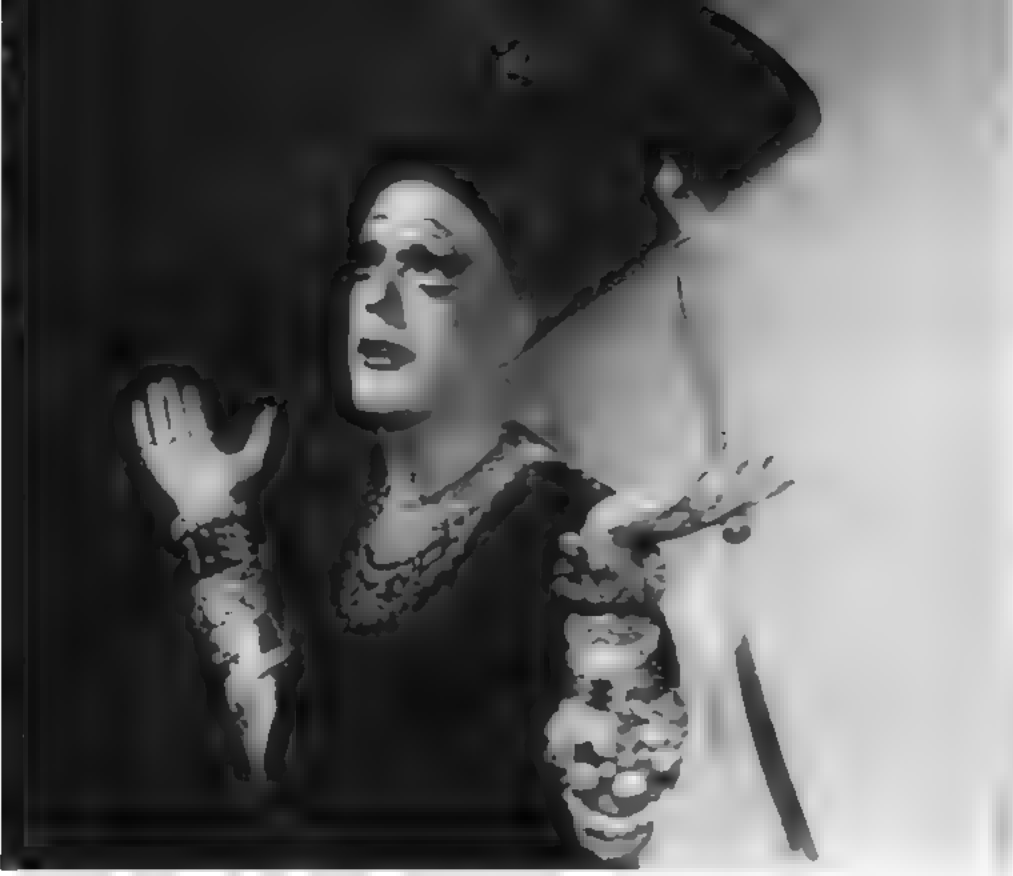
The core thematic concern that would develop throughout Eichelberger's thirty-two scripts shows itself in this example from his first play. The stories Eichelberger dramatized without exception focus on the lives, fictional or historic, of strong women who overcome all obstacles. Adapting the life stories of such historic figures as Lucrezia Borgia, Lola Montez, Elizabeth I, Mary Stuart, or Mary Lincoln, Eichelberger's performances frequently ended with a song whose title acknowledges this over riding thematic-- "Women Who Survive." As a gay man, Eichelberger's enactment of and identification

with these queen stories traced the signifier in every sense of the phrase.

Through various performance clubs, Eichelberger developed a style of performance indebted to stealing focus from the noisy drunken chatter and socializing of late night bar patrons. The Seussian sensibility and cup o' soup theatricalism learned working before these crowds never left his performative vocabulary. Elements such as rhymed cadence text to alert the ear over beer-induced bar chatter and monstrous wigs and flashy costuming to avert the eye, remained critical coinage in Eichelberger's economy of performance outside the bar environment. Tactics of attention getting developed through the club scene remained constant elements in his later



Photo: courtesy Eichelberger. Re: 1990 SF



work before more considerate audiences

Over the years Eichelberger developed his own constellation of shtick. His performances constantly strained against his strong classical training as they interrogated his love of popular forms. Any Eichelberger performance was under constant threat of breaking down into bouts of accordion playing, songs, cart wheels, splits, film, dances, and fire eating. Adamant about his position as an American actor, Eichelberger pulled from traditions of Vaudeville, Burlesque, Yiddish Theatre, Broadway and the classical cannon

Ideologically Brechtian in a post-modern world of gay liberation, Eichelberger's mise en-scene recognized the theatre for what it is -- just that, theatre. Theatrical conventions were to be outed, not closeted by naturalism. Production devices such as fog machines or spray cans of aerosol air freshener to suggest the smell of a forest glade, were always employed in full and obvious view. As clumsy substitutes for the real thing, their position as tropes was further underlined by their inevitable mechanical break down or failure. Demystifying both the mechanics and language of theatre, aesthetic distance was shattered in Eichelberger's theatre of the bogus. Trained in grade-school dramatics and community theatre, his performance style of tawdry preposterousness tapped into a collective love of make believe. Artifice in anything -- especially language, theatrical conventions of naturalism, and gender presentation -- were to be lovingly exposed at

every opportunity. A theatre of the bogus, Eichelberger's work strove to reveal truth by foregrounding artificiality.

Confronted with such an embarrassment of riches and eye averting tactics, the meager fifteen page script lost any correlation to running time once caught up by the whirlwind of Eichelbergerian performaturgy. From night to night, performance of the same script could vary from just over forty-five minutes to a full two and a half hours

His orgasmic employment of the aside, the Eichelberger etcetera, never shortened a performance either. Through this device, friends were always excitedly recognized from the stage and incorporated into the script. Friend or foe, he would also acknowledge the night's critic. During a performance of **Herd of Buffalo** (1989), Eichelberger stepped over the footlights removing the ever present note pad of **Village Voice** reviewer C. Carr. Towering over the seated critic, he remarked, "Let me see. I always let you see what I write."

Functioning initially as a defense mechanism for dealing with rowdy club audiences and hecklers, the etceteras over the course of his career became virtuoso displays of verbal agility. Their aleatory nature allowed him to incorporate the better ones for the entire run of a particular production and drop the less successful attempts.

Through the etcetera, Eichelberger could literally speak whatever happened to be on his mind during any given performance. An ever present element along with the fire-

eating, cartwheels, and accordion-accompanied songs, the etceteras could go on for several minutes. For example, during a performance of his last play **Das Vedanya Mama** (1990) he offered this politically well endowed etcetera.

If you want to see gay art you go over to the Public Theatre. There you will see, living in the flesh, heterosexual men playing faggots. They'll make you cry and feel sorry for them. You come over here and you'll see a real live non-heterosexual faggot playing a woman and all I can do is make you laugh. That's the difference. This is my kind of theatre. You don't see any homoerotic art in my plays ever, do you?"

Rounding out the compulsory attention tactics of Eichelberger's production values is the element he was perhaps best known for. Drag. "I know. It never stops; it's amazing. When I was in a repertory company, I acted all kinds of parts, but the minute I stepped over the sex barrier the critics got crazy."

Like the drag of Jack Smith's film **Flaming Creatures** (1963) and the work of Ludlam, Eichelberger's drag reveled in child like play and make believe. Eichelberger's drag style was akin to gender fuck drag in which indicators of masculinity are maintained. (A glittered beard or moustache shining through an otherwise feminine presentation.) Yet, masculinity per se was not the concern peeping through Eichelberger's drag. While his drag never attempted to "pass" as does traditional takes on female impersonation, it also never attempted like gender fuck to construct startling images of binarisms. Eichelberger's drag was out to bring highlight another element. "I want the audience to see the actor, Ethyl Eichelberger, being the character, whoever the character is."

Drag may not at first seem the natural mode of performance for a six-foot-two-inch boy from the heartland. Bear in mind, however, his character-actor past and never forget the extreme impact of Ludlam. Further, the make-believe and lies of theatre, not to mention everyday life as a gay man, are most fully impacted through drag. "I chose to be a drag performer... because I was tired of being a character actor who played weird people, because I know it affects your life. What you play on stage affects who you are, and at one point I said I only want to play the most glamorous, most magnificent, strong women in the world, that have ever been in history. And I do it and it has turned me into a better person."

***** Impact



Photo courtesy Ethyl Eichelberger's Restaurant SF

Eichelberger's performance work has impacted a wide range of cultural products. From Sting albums to the 1993 revival of **Einstein on the Beach**, his mark increasingly manifests itself in strikingly concrete manners. Since his AIDS-related suicide, the impact his life and work affected has been directly addressed in at least two performances pieces.

The penultimate monologue, "A Thousand Points of Light," in actor/vist David Drake's episodic one-man show **The Night Larry Kramer Kissed Me** (1992), concerns people who have died of AIDS. During this sequence, Drake pays homage to Eichelberger's influence upon his work. In describing the events of a night on the town, Drake recalls the impact of an Eichelberger performance, "In that show of his own solo creation of smoke and mirrors and mascara and stilettos and fire and music and rhinestones and mischief and magic, Ethyl magic. Who cast a spell upon our eyes and ears and hands and heart and into our night into our core into queer. Which sent us skipping through the East Village streets wailing songs of 'Strong Women.'"

Likewise fueled by Ethyl, Karen Finley rages in her performance and installation piece **A Certain Level of Denial** (1992), "Yeah, I'll tell you about performance art. Yeah Ethyl had AIDS. Let's make some blood prints off of Ethyl's wrist. Let's take some photos of my friend killing himself -- blow up the photo -- and put some God damn text on it that says, DEAD -- and make an edition of 10. Yeah let me tell you about art."

While these tributes stand as personal statements of impact, it can be argued more broadly that Eichelberger's theatre extended the political parameters of the Ridiculous

genre from which he emerged. Eichelberger's theatre went beyond gay. It was queer. Present at the weekend long Stonewall Riots of June 1969 and an active participant in New York City's underground gay theatre movement from its inception, Eichelberger developed a para-ridiculous style.

Eichelberger's theatre of the para-ridiculous serves as a liminal fulcrum between the Ridiculous theatre movement and the later street theatre by activists groups such as ACT-UP and Queer Nation. Politically in advance of the former, its content and tactics push the theatrical envelope just short of the latter. The politics Eichelberger presented on stage are far more activist and "in your face" than that of Ludlam and yet not as aggressive as those of later groups such as ACT-UP and Queer Nation. Eichelberger's theatre did not shy away from directly presenting gay issues and characters upon the stage as did Ludlam's. Focused on women who survive, Eichelberger's plays more easily lend themselves than do Ludlam's to readings as metaphors for the contemporary politicized status of the lesbian and gay communities.

Speaking on the Ridiculous Theatre movement, Charles Ludlam stated, "Jack [Smith] is the daddy of us all." Ludlam became the next father. Ethyl served the line after Ludlam. Each artist pushed the Ridiculous theatre form one step beyond his predecessor. Smith's **Flaming Creatures** thrust the Ridiculous aesthetic upon a public. Ludlam broadened this public while adding elements of classical structure and theatrical whimsy. Ethyl's para-ridiculous theatre added issues of overtly queer politics to the form. Collectively they helped define and shape entire generations of Queer theatre.

The Plays Of Ethyl Eichelberger

The following is a list of the complete plays of Ethyl Eichelberger. As Eichelberger presented works in repertory throughout his life, date following title indicates the first year in which the work was performed. Manuscript and typescript versions of all works are in the author's possession. **Das Vedanya Mama** is the only published text and may be found in Michael Feingold, ed., **Grove New American Theatre**, New York: Grove Press, 1993.

Phedra (1972), **Nefertiti** (1976), **Auntie Belle Emme** (1979), **Medea** (1980), **Carlotta, Empress of Mexico** (1980), **Minnie the Maid** (1981 Villager Award), **Shi Liu** (1981), **Jocasta or Boy Crazy** (1982), **Catherine was Great** (1982), **Elizabeth I and Mary Stuart** (1982), **Lucrezia Borgia** (1982 Obie Award), **Marie Antoinette** (1983), **Lola Montez** (1983), **Toulouse Women** (1984), **Ruth Ruth** (1984), **Souled Out, (or Dr. Mary Faustus)** (1984), **Mrs. Wiggs in the Cabbage Patch** (1985), **Hamlette** (1985), **Medusa** (1985), **Leer** (1985), **Fowl Ball** (1985), **Cassanova** (1985), **Rip Van Winkle** (1986), **The Tempest of Chim Lee** (1987), **Saint Joan** (1987), **Klytemnestra, The Nightingale of Argos** (1987), **Fiasco** (1988), **The Lincolns** (1988 Serious Fun! commission), **Ariadne Obnoxious** (1988), **Herd of Buffalo** (1989), **Dilbert Dingle Dong (the Doomed), or A Nest Full of Ninnies** (1990), and **Das Vedanya Mama** (1990).

Joe E. Jeffreys is an author and critic whose work has appeared in **The Village Voice**, **The Advocate**, and **The Drama Review**.



"Author's Query"

This article serves as a pilot study for a dissertation on Ethyl Eichelberger currently being written by the author for New York University's Department of Performance Studies. Readers with any memories, stories, photographs, programs, etc. concerning Ethyl are encouraged to contact:

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No matter how small or insignificant you may feel your story or piece of ephemera to be, it may prove the missing link in this study. All responses are welcome as I attempt to write a full portrait of this unique artist."

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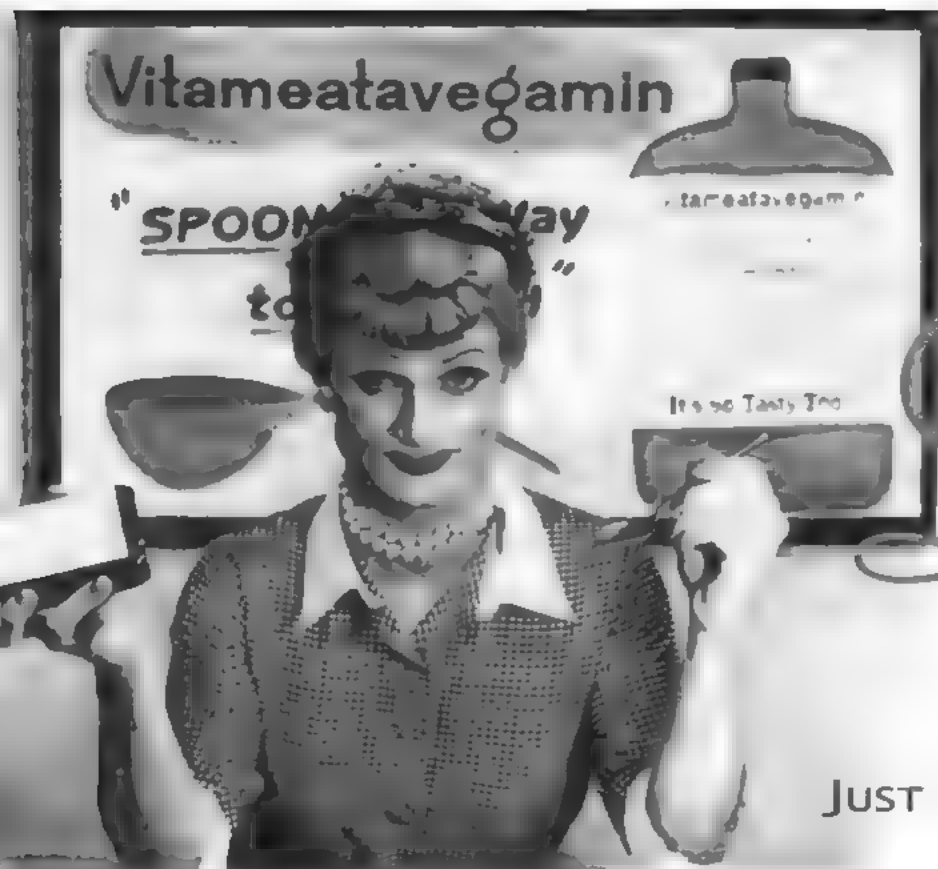
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CAMERON *Lucy* TODD

JUST WANTS TO BE IN THE SHOW

CELEBRITY IMPERSONATOR CAMERON TODD TELLS WHAT IT'S LIKE TO IMPERSONATE RICKY RICARDO'S BETTER HALF

with Lois Commondenominator
Edited by Ken Dickmann

Some of the best drag careers have been launched because of just being silly on Halloween, and Cameron Todd's detailed impersonation of comedienne Lucille Ball is no exception. He has turned that recognition into a non-professional career of performing at numerous national AIDS benefits and television appearances as a specialty act. Out of it came the popular "Babalu Show" that was performed at AIDS benefits with the foursome of Lucy, Ricky, Ethel and Fred. Today Cameron is a solo act but still is giving his all to entertaining at benefits as America's favorite redhead mainly throughout Southern California.

And what humble beginnings did Cameron Todd come from?

I was born and raised in Evansville, Wisconsin. Wisconsin being the dairy State and the land of Pabst Blue Ribbon Beer (gross!) is a beautiful State, but it's boring. The city I grew up in however, is lovely. It has 2,000 people, and everybody knew everybody. It's very quaint and park-looking. My ethnic background is

German. I changed my name from Heinkeldorf. I came to L.A. in 1980. I was very much in the closet. I spent a spell in the Army prior to the move. You could say that I was conveniently, honorably discharged.

How did the idea of impersonating Lucy come about?

My friends Eric and Michael and I went shopping for a video camera a few years ago to video tape our first time In Drag. Not knowing exactly what we were going to do, we just slopped on the make-up. Eric was video taping a close-up of my lips in particular and remarked in an eerie way, "Cameron, you look just like Lucy, Lucy Ball!" From that point, I decided to go out as Lucy for Halloween even though I thought I looked like Polly Bergen the first time.

How did The Babalu Show get started?

Before The Babalu Show, we were on Santa Monica Boulevard one Halloween as Lucy and Ethel and were approached by employees of AIDS Project Los Angeles to appear at one of their functions. They had asked us if we would do something for their Buddy Program. How perfect - having Lucy and Ethel represent APLA's Buddy Program. We did their Buddy Christmas parties in a house up in the Hollywood Hills. That was our first time doing something other than Halloween.

Through much support of friends and encouragement, we put the show together. I

guess because of how we were discovered," The Babalu Show actually came out of the onslaught of AIDS. We did Gay Pride Festival two years in a row in '92 and '93 on main stage. That was the only time we were able to put together a production of the whole show. Otherwise, there were too many props to carry for a ten minute show. With the exception of the Festival, we always did little appearances, whether it was Lucy and Ricky or Lucy and Ethel.

The Babalu Show featured us lipsynching some of I Love Lucy's "Most Memorable Musical Moments." We never got as far as acting out full skits until I did Vitameatavegamin. Everything else was musical. Eric De La Cruz joined the show playing Ricky. Eric and I played Lucy and Ricky doing numbers like We'll Build a Bungalow, The Indian Number, while Michael and I played Lucy and Ethel singing Friendship. The very last show, we recruited a Fred whose name is David Garder. He did a real good job Michael took ill after that, and has since passed away.

We prepared for the shows by watching the videos to learn the words and the acting that went with them. We'd write down the lyrics on the computer and learn our lines. When we were on stage, the audio portion that was coming over the P.A. was transferred from hi-fi video copies of the show that I hooked up to a cassette recorder I did all the editing, like cutting out Bob Hope's part in the song called "Nobody Loves

the Ump." I also accompanied the tape with my Casio keyboard to pump up the sound.

Tell us about transforming into Lucy!

It's taken a few years for me to refine the look, and there is still room for improvement. I'm lucky that my face is close enough to her's to where I already have some of her features, and I'm also about the same height that Lucy was. I do an early 50s Lucy. I make all of my clothes. My wig is a synthetic blond wig that was painted with orange Penetone magic markers. I double up on lashes, and draw in those lips.

How did you learn how to make your clothes?

I learned it on my own. I had access to a little Brother sewing machine a few years ago, and for my Vitameatavegamin dress, I ripped open a tight-fitting 40s type of skirt and copied it to fit my proportions. I didn't use a mannequin or a pattern. If you turned the thing inside out, it really looks bad, but on the outside it looks great! I made it easier on myself because I also made it a two piece and not a complete dress. There were three or four episodes that Lucy wore the same check dress, the one in Vitameatavegamin. The designer on the original show was Eloise Jensen.

Do you ever shave your arms, legs or chest?

No . . . , well, yes, but nothing to do with Lucy. I cover up anything that might reveal me as a man as best I can. I use gloves to cover my hands or wear long sleeves, and double up on the nylons and leotards.

What's the worst part of doing Lucy?

I've finally gotten used to the heels, but what I've never gotten used to are the belts around my waist. A man's waist is three inches lower than a woman's waist, so as Lucy, I put the belt higher than where my waist is.

What other elements go into the Lucy costume?

I use standard falsies in the bra. Lucy was not large on top, so I don't want to put emphasis up there. In the beginning though, we played Lucy and Ethel with major wamba's, don't ask me why. Of course, I pad my hips.

Do you require props?

I use a Vitameatavegamin sign stand, bottle and a spoon. The bottle was a brandy bottle. I went to several liquor stores to find the right design. The contents of the bottle is 95% corn syrup and 5% peach schnapps. I found out that the original contents on the show was apple pectin.

Have you ever tried to do Lucy live?

Yes, but I haven't gotten the Lucy persona down yet as far as her voice goes, so I rely on her recorded material from the show to lipsynch to.

Tell us some good Lucy trivia!

I've got tons of books, some of which people have given me. People like to know their maiden names and their middle names. Lucy's full name on the show was Lucille Esmerelda Magillicuddy, and Ethel had two or three different names - Ethel May and Ethel Louise Potter. Ethel was always supposed to be frumpy and a little bit overweight, although I always thought she looked really good. She was full-figured, but she was never fat. In any series, they start somewhere and evolve. They get more money to buy better clothes and better hairdo's. The first few episodes, Ethel was extremely blond, then she toned down.

What's your favorite Lucy episode?

I like the William Holden one, "L.A. At Last," where she lights her nose on fire and the scene in the Brown Derby. I actually went to the Brown Derby back in 1982, and I saw Lucy there with her friend, Mary Wickes. This was ten years before I ever thought of playing her. I also like the "Lucy Fakes Illness" episode where Lucy has amnesia.

Give Dragazine's readers some good Drag tips!

A great way to remove almost all of your make-up is by using Baby Wipes. They are fortified with conditioners and they won't burn your eyes. If your lips are stained and look like you broke out the kool-aid, here's what you do. Moisten your finger tip and dip it into cigarette ashes, then rub on the stained area of your lips. This acts as an abrasive. Leave it on for a moment, then rub it off with the Baby Wipe. I'm serious - it works!

What have been some of the highlights of your career as Lucy?

Every AIDS benefit was always a highlight. Receiving a letter from Lucy's daughter, Lucie Arnaz, giving me her blessing. We entertained at one of the late Martha Raye's birthday parties opening the show for Jim Bailey. I have had the honor to share the stage with several comedians such as Ellen DeGeneres, Martin Short, ANT and Judy Tenuta. Some of the complements I have received from celebrities were very nice. Martin Short really loved my drawn-in lips and lipsynching. Mr. Blackwell and Charles Pierce thought I looked lovely. Gloria Allred was speechless but in awe. Catherine O'Hara loved my eyes and lips.

I have always enjoyed people's reactions when they see me. I also enjoyed filming a segment for MTV with Taylor Negrón and also being on America's Funniest Home Videos.

Tell us about your current show.

We haven't done The Babalu Show since Michael passed away. I currently perform the Vitameatavegamin segment. It was first aired in 1951, during the first season. That, by the way, was the only episode that ironically, Ethel didn't appear in. Bob Carroll Jr. and Madeline Pugh wrote that. Besides my charity work, I've performed at Igby's Comedy Cabaret, the Hollywood Palace, the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, and I've done cable TV and from London, The Amanda Late Night Show. Most recently I flew to Philadelphia to do a benefit performance for Action AIDS.

Do you have to psyche yourself up to act like Lucy?

I have a natural, built-in energy like Lucy. Once I put on the Lucy outfit, I tap into my energy which is like the energy she put out, and oh what a rush!

Are you friends with other impersonators?

I've met some of the really big ones, like Jim Bailey who does Judy Garland, Charles Pierce who's known for his Bette Davis, and Jimmy James who does Marilyn Monroe. Other local friends that I know are Lar Erickson who is a man of a thousand celebrity faces and is known for his Carol Channing, and Ric Carl who looks just like Joan "Oh Sure" Rivers.

What's next for you?

I still make AIDS my number one priority as an entertainer. I will always volunteer my talents where AIDS is concerned. Some of the goals I have are to meet both Lucie and Desi Arnaz Jr. I would like to appear in a sitcom and music video, and I plan to create a black and white version of Lucy just as soon as I can figure out how to color my tongue! *Dz*





JIM BAILEY

HE KNOWS EVERY PART BY HEART

by Lois Commondenominator

Jim Bailey is a singular sensation! He is alone in his league. No other celebrity impersonator can match his variety, quality or consistency of realism regarding the illusions he creates. He combines impeccable vocal mimicry with looks, movement, inflection, patter and timing. His wardrobe, makeup and wig styling is haunting, capturing the spirit of the ladies we all love.



Since the early 1970s, he's been appearing on stage and screen in a variety of roles, but Jim is known best for performing larger-than-life female show business legends. His Judy Garland, Barbra Streisand and Peggy Lee are unsurpassed. I recently had the pleasure of catching him perform as Barbra Streisand for The Show Of The Month Series at The Academy Plaza Theater in North Hollywood. I'll be seeing him again in December performing at USC's Bing Theater in Ruth Franklin's new play, 'Fragile Fire,' directed by Paul Winfield, and in February, he's coming back to do Judy at The Academy. He tells us that his tours have been very rewarding, but the legitimate stage calls him back. If he's ever in town, we strongly urge you to see him when he reprises the roles that made him famous while there's still a chance. Even if you are not a fan of these ladies, Jim will startle, seduce and thrill you!

Jim Bailey is ultimately an actor whose specialty is women's roles, but not just any women. Jim picks women the public adores, creating a built-in audience and a familiar reference point for comparison and attainment.

Jim's fans know better than to call him a Drag Queen. He has always fought that label and has been right to do so, because what he does is not a send-up, caricature or an accentuation. Unlike Drag Queens, Jim's act doesn't employ camp, although some of what he does has a kitsch element to it. To Jim's disappointment however, the vast majority of the public equates men in wigs, heels, dresses and makeup with Drag Queens. Jim prefers the term 'illusionist,' for he immerses himself into his character, providing the illusion that what you are seeing is the actual star, and the effect is seamless. Drag Queens do not distill and reanimate their icons on stage to this refined degree. Jim hits his targets so accurately that his talents deserve a special category of recognition.

What goes into becoming Barbra or Judy or Peggy? Besides the outer appearance and nuance, there is the pact he enters with his audiences who yearn to be fooled. They come to witness a bit of magic, but it's not the wig and makeup singing, it's Jim. Jim is a trained lyric tenor in his own right. Even if a Generation X twenty year old had never been a Judy Garland fan, Jim's unique performance of all those great tunes stands up well. He ignites the stage with best-loved showstopping music and lyrics that makes his shows so rousing and entertaining. Jim, however, is singing, although it sounds like Streisand or Garland or Lee. As Barbra, he'll do Somewhere, People, Evergreen, I'd Rather Be Blue, On A Clear Day, Before The Parade Passes By, The Way We Were, Second Hand Rose, Happy Days and Don't Rain On My Parade, just to name a few. As Garland, his choices are equally stunning, beginning with Over The Rainbow, Rockabye, The Man That Got Away, Smile, You Made Me Love You, The Trolley Song, Zing Went The Strings, Ol' Man River, Come Rain Or Come Shine, Get Happy, As Long As He Needs Me and Stormy Weather as a sample selection. How can he fail with music and lyrics like that?

Jim Bailey is an artist whose art is a hybrid of many show business disciplines, and he excels at them all. Jim is a superb performer whose uncanny illusions are no mirages. No one questions Hal Holbrook's performance as Mark Twain, or Robert Morse's re-creation of Truman Capote. Jim brings us closer to the stars that we love. It's just that they're ladies, and isn't that a bit of real magic! For bookings and other tour information, please contact Stephen Campbell Management, 350 North Crescent Drive, #105, Beverly Hills, CA 90210, 310-271-1975. *Dg*

Jim has a vast and loyal following all around the world who fill theaters quickly, so we recommend making early reservations when the ads break. Watch for him in your area. 1995 Tour: **March** - Florida, **April** - Palm Springs Convention Center, **May** - Chicago Apollo Theater, **June & July** - London, Birmingham, Brighton, Cardiff, Norwich & Paris, **August** - Buffalo Melody Fair, Albany, Cape Cod, Westbury Music Fair, North & South Shore Music Circuses, **September & October** - Off Broadway, **November** - San Francisco & Arizona State Fair.

TAKE A PAGAN HOLIDAY

Pagan Holiday has certainly been busy these days! "It's been a mad whirl," said the voluptuous vixen about her 'return' to show business. "First I was an extra in the Roseanne Halloween episode, then I did The Fresca Vinyl Show, tore through a guest spot in The Plush life, and finally dashed off to San Francisco where gorgeous Chloe Webb (Tales of The City) and I were co-hostesses at a gala AIDS fund raiser, The Muscle Sisters' Drag Ball."

Dragazine caught up with Hollywood's cotton candy blonde in the parking lot of a convenience store taking a well-deserved break between engagements. Under the glow of the Seven Eleven sign, she was luminous, ethereal. A mist of platinum curls framed the perfect oval of her face. Her skin was like peach-tinted cream. Was it really seventeen years since the release of her last movie? Her allure was ageless. Could the rumors of illegal monkey gland injections be true? We complemented Miss Holiday on the apparent success of her comeback.



recently, and we were there! What a distinct pleasure it was to see her back on stage where she belonged, at The Plush Life, now at Rudolfo's in Silverlake. The Plush Life is a grand Drag soap opera put on by Mr. Dan and Paul V. of Dragstrip 66, with the help of

a bunch of friends. Pagan portrays Mr. Dan's, aka Gina Lotramin's evil foster sister, Peggy Ann Ho Chi Minh Lotramin. Recently, Pagan stepped out of character to just be herself - Pagan Holiday. Star. Legend. Myth. And here's what she had to say:

I've been dyin' to do this, because, lately I've been feelin' that my life lacks somethin', and I've decided what is missin' is an interaction with my wonderful fans. I know a number of fans I'd surely love to personally interact with.

I thought the best thing I could do was to take some of the fan letters that I've been receivin', and answer them personally so y'all could get the know the real me. People see me as a symbol of giamoh' and

HOLLYWOOD'S COTTON CANDY BLOND RETURNS TO TELL IT LIKE IT IS.
OR AT LEAST LIKE IT SHOULD BE.

"I prefer to say 'return,' darling," purred the star, an ironic smile curving the corners of her rouged lips. She bit the end of a cream-filled cupcake, and continued. "When I stopped being offered the type of glamorous roles that suited me, I retired from the screen, like Garbo. I became a recluse behind the walls of Breakwynde, my estate in the Hollywood Hills. But my devoted fans have demanded that I return. Look at the dark, grim state of the world - recession, repression, Republicans. What time could be more ideal to bring back style and glamour to a public starved for it? The great glamour girls like Crawford, Hayward and Maria Montez are all gone. Do we really need any more films that just show middle-aged men blowing things up?"

Images of Pagan Holiday's past screen roles began to focus in my memory. She was the wild child raised by apes in 'Doreen of the Jungle,' the doomed chanteuse in 'Lip-Sync or Swim,' and of course the homicidal understudy in her last and possibly greatest movie, 'Song Bird of Sing Sing.'

Pagan took a break from her cloistered yet glamorous life on her estate known as Breakwynde, to get close and personal on stage

romance, but really and truly, I'm just the girl next dooah . . . dependin' on where ya live.

I asked my secretary to just grab me a pile of letters at random, and I'd like to read them to you folks here and to the audience at home. We're bein' broadcast all over the country tonight, which is very excitin' to me, although I tend to frighten the people in Ohio. I guess it's simply because they're not fashion forward there. A piece of travel advice y'all might want to take into account is never to visit any state that begins with the letter "O" or "I." You'll regret it. I know I did.

At any rate, let me read this first letter without further ado. It's from a Roberta in Irvine. Such a charmin' town. All the buildings look exactly alike. It must be so comfortin'.

"Dear Miss Holiday, I saw you on stage recently, and you looked very glamorous. Then, the other night I saw you in a film on TV called Zombie Co-Eds On Mars. The film was made in 1964. Just how old are you anyway? Also, do you plan to make any films in the future?"

Well, Roberta, let me just say this. When we made that picture, I was practically a child. They used to pad me quite a bit. And, any

woman who would reveal her age would reveal just about anything. But I do admit to bein' thirtyish. 'Course I've admitted it since Eisenhower'. Honesty is the best policy.

I do have a new movie in the plannin' stages right now. I wanted to raise my sights from the horror movies I used to make, and we're doin' a classic this time. It's a new version of A Tale of Two Cities, by Charles Dickens. The script writers are tailoring it to my unique persona. Somebody at the studio suggested that we call it a Sale of Two Titties, but I rejected that immediately because I hate to be crass. I don't know if y'all have read the book, but it's about this guy who goes back and forth between two towns 'til they cut off his head. We've retitled it 'Guillotine Girls In Paris,' and we're makin' it into a musical. I think you'll enjoy it, although the truth is I don't sing. I really don't do much of anything, but they told me that they'd just dub my voice. I was deeply afraid that dubbed singing might make people think I was a Drag Queen, but my director assured me that lots of stars have had their voices dubbed, like Ava Gardner, Rita Hayworth, and Mr. Ed. So I thought there's no reason I can't join the ranks of such immortals. Y'all look for my new picture soon. Let's see. What else have I got here? This one's from a Maude in Culva' City.

"Dear Miss Holiday, you are my favorite star. Do you plan to do any work on TV? I want to be able to see you without leaving my house."

I think you've got a problem Maude, that may require professional help, but as a matter of fact, I haven't done much on the small screen. I usually don't fit on it. But I just finished a guest spot on the Fresca Vinyl Show for cable TV, a very excitin' program. And, just yesterday, my friends Crystal DeCanter, Wanda Lust and I, finished filmin' the Roseanne program. We really did! I know you think I'm lyin'! Just watch the Halloween episode, Angels, and look for the girl in the pink wig - it's little me!

I was confused because you know, at first, she was called Roseanne Barr, and then she was Roseanne Arnold. I didn't know what to call her, but Crystal said, "Just remember it's now Roseanne. One name only - just like Flipper."

Well, she's marvelous! I was thrilled about a big part on her show. At least I assumed it was a big part - the 'Other Woman,' or somethin'! But it turned out that I was what is called 'atmosphere.' I just had to stand around lookin' gorgeous. I layered the role with nuance though, and after we wrapped up the show, I chatted with Roseanne about a spin-off series of my own. I suggested a couple of things. One idea was sort of an updated Charlie's Angels combined with Baywatch. I thought I'd call it Aqua Dragnet. I also suggested a steamy soap opera - Pagan Place. I'm sure Roseanne was interested in one of my program ideas but it was hard to tell since she was in a moving car, and I was runnin' along side as fast as I could, but my dress was tight and it's hard to run in five inch heels, so eventually she got out of my hearin' range. I know she must have been interested though, because I heard her say to her driver, "Who is that bitch anyway?" You can plan on seein' my own series soon. In the mean time, watch Roseanne on Halloween week. This next letter is from Anonymous.

"Dear Pagan Holiday, if a no talent bitch like you can get so far in show business, then I can be an actress too!"

Well, you know if I can inspire one young performer like that, then I think I've really accomplished something worthwhile. Actually, Hollywood is filled with so many types of performers. There are some with a lot of talent, and some with not too much. I really feel safe in sayin' that I'm the only performer in Hollywood with no talent whatsoever. I think that makes me unique. People can project whatever they want onto me. Also, folks like y'all who are familiar with me and my work know that you're lucky if I even show up. Now, let's see. What does this one say? This is from a Brian in Hollywood

I HAVEN'T DONE MUCH ON THE SMALL SCREEN. I USUALLY DON'T FIT ON IT.

"Mother, why do you deny my existence? Just because I ..."

I'll read that one later. Here's one from a Loreen of Orange County.

"Dear Miss Holiday, I really feel I need more glamoh' in my life. My friend Paula and I were wondering if you use cosmetics, and how you feel about cosmetic surgery. What advice can you give us?"

Well, I'll admit that I do use a little lip gloss. Frankly, I adore makeup. Color me Pagan. I do like to think of myself as a natural beauty, but then, I like to think of myself as 25. You know, it takes so long to get my makeup on that I just hate to take it off. I tried sleepin' with a plastic bag over my head, and it was a big mistake. I do not advise it. What I finally started doing because my make up kept smearin' under the arduous routine of film work, and stage shows - such as this - such as it is, is quite simple. Once my makeup has been applied, I coat it with a thin layer of polyurethane. It doesn't go anywhere and is good for a month. After that, when I want to change the color scheme, I just go to that unfinished furniture place on Western Avenue, and they strip it off. Then I start all over again.

It's also important to be well-frocked. Crystal DeCanter designs many of my gowns, but this particular one is by Mister Mark of South Pasadena. I adore it! An hour ago, it was just yardage, and in the middle of puttin' it togetha', we ran completely out of thread. So it's just held in place with the grease from some taco chips, but it should last 'til the show is over at least.

People keep askin' me about my age, and I think this is an obsession that I don't care to comment on. It's just important to look good at any age. Age is a state of mind. I will admit that I've had my nose done and my lips done, and my eyes. And yes, I've been tucked, and lifted, and had my tits done. I do my own hair though. I'm not worried about my breast implants because they're not any of those dangerous silicone products. They're actually Tupperware, so I can bring my lunch in one of them for a long day of shootin'. The only problem happens if I'm rehearsin' a love scene, cause they keep burpin' when the leadin' man squeezes me.

Another key to allure is fragrance. I am comin' out with my own fragrance soon, just like Liz did. Liz Taylor that is. She's an actress. I wanted to call the fragrance somethin' marvelous like Obsession, but I wanted a name that was really me. So I worked with an advertisin' agency, and we came up with the perfect name. 'Abomination.' The ad campaign shows me clutchin' the bottle with the slogan, "Abomination. For Every Damned Woman Alive! I hope it's gonna be a big success. I hope I've helped you out, Loreen. Feel free to write me again. We just have time for one more letter. This is from Big Jake at the Adult Correctional Facility at Lompoc. Hmmm. What does he have to say?

"Yo bitch! A lot of the guys here in the pen have photos of you. Sometimes when the lights go out, I like to lie here and think about rammin' my hot ..."

Gez whiz! I wonder if he's put down his phone numba? I better save this one and give Mr. Big Jake a call. I hate to think of him all nervous and alone.

I would truly like to say that these letters mean a lot to me. And I sure would like to say that without my fans I'd be nothin'. Of course, it wouldn't be true.

SOUTH AFRICA'S ROUGH DIAMOND

Evita Bezuidenhout



Evita at the President's office.

PETER-DIRK UYS' GRAND DAME ALTER EGO HAS HER ENAMELED FINGER ON THE PULSE OF POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

In the dark days of Apartheid, the politicians in South Africa were white, male, hard line and easily satirized. Their greatest enemy in the world of comedy was a member of their own tribe. He's a white Afrikaner male named Pieter-Dirk Uys (pronounced Ace), who imitated the Apartheid architects with devastating accuracy. Uys' sharpest barbs were delivered in Drag, when he dressed as an Afrikaner Grand Dame named Evita. Like the rest of South Africa, Evita and her creator have just made the transition to Democracy. The new leaders, unlike their predecessors, are clamoring to appear on national television with the country's most famous Drag Queen. NPR's Ann Cooper reports now from Johannesburg. Evita, followed by her camera crew, knocks on the door of an important politician. He welcomes her in with open arms.

"Hello Evita!" he says in a friendly tone, and Evita sighs her hello back.

"Minister Joe Slovo, I presume?"

"There's always something new out of Africa, isn't there, both you and me! Come in!"

Evita Bezuidenhout, a former diplomat and Apartheid stalwart, is calling on Joe Slovo, South Africa's new Minister of Housing. Slovo is a Communist and a former guerilla soldier who fought to overthrow the regime that Evita personifies. Evita's husband was the Apartheid Minister for Black Housing, a job he exploited to build his own vacation homes. Evita was South African Ambassador to Bapetikosweti, a homeland where blacks were kept segregated from whites. Never mind that Evita's entire story is fiction. As cameras record their meeting, Slovo, the very real freedom fighter turned Cabinet Minister, invites the bogus diplomat into his kitchen for a cup of tea.

"D'you take milk?" he asks

"Uh, ja," is her reply.

"And sugar?" he inquires.

"Nee, liewe aarde (No, goodness me)!" she squeals back negatively in Afrikaans

"Then you're trying to keep your figure?" he responds

"Well, it's a little bit of keep up with the de Klerk's, you know," she says with a wink. "Manke's so maer! (Mrs. de Klerk's so thin!)"

For the next half hour, Evita and Slovo chat about communism, go swimming at Slovo's health club and lay bricks at a township housing project. Not once does Slovo acknowledge what everyone knows - that the plump, fiftyish matron in garish eye shadow and bouffant curls, wearing a silk shirtwaist and stiletto heels, is actually Pieter-Dirk Uys. In his Afrikaner Drag, Uys is host of South African television's newest and most unorthodox political series called Funigalore (pronounced Funny Galore, from 'Fanagalo,' a pidgin language word mixing Zulu, Afrikaans and English - Esperanzo of the mines).

Every Friday night, Pieter-Dirk Uys, dressed as Evita Bezuidenhout, opens the show from the rear seat of a stretch limo. Evita still favors one of her trademark outfits - a leopard skin turban with matching coat. But, in the spirit of change, her wardrobe now includes African batiks and a billowing sequined Ball gown in the colors of the country's new flag. To win over her interview subjects - Cabinet Ministers, Provincial Premiers, and the Speaker of the new multiracial Parliament, Evita has added a smattering of African words to her vocabulary

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"Saybona, Dumela, good evening, hello. Ja, like so often in the past, I'm on my way to Parliament. Do you know, the opening of Parliament was always the most exciting occasion on the calendar. The Parliamentary wives were all dressed to kill, and their husbands, the Ministers, all ready to kill. But this is different. Now, we are in a new South Africa. This is a new Parliament. We have a new Speaker, not a Mister Speaker, but a Madame Speaker. Yes, I'm going to visit Dr. Frene Ginwala."

It is hard to imagine a Western politician allowing Evita in the door. White House or Congressional advisers would surely warn their bosses against an ad-libbed on-camera appearance with a female impersonator known for his acid sharp one liners. But whatever else they may prove to be, South Africa's new leaders are good sports. Parliamentary Speaker Ginwala not only throws open the legislative chamber, she insists on dressing Evita for the occasion . . . In an Indian Sari, like the one the Speaker herself wears. Then, Ginwala, an African National Congress member, probes rumors that the fictional Evita might take over former President F.W. de Klerk's National Party.

"Are you planning, maybe, to stand in the next election?" asks Ginwala.
"Well! Ek weet nie (I don't know). Frene! You know all sorts of things are being spoken about me leading the National Party," replies Evita.
"I've heard that one," says Ginwala with a smile.
"Well, I think it's important that, um, that the National Party also shares a very optimistic front, and of course a new South African Front," Evita doublespeaks back.
"Yes, but how do you manage to be a member of the National Party and the ANC Women's League?" asks Ginwala, noting the conflict of interests as she plays along.
"Hum (long pause) I'm an interim member of the National Party, and a transitional member of the ANC."

Evita's coy response is a dig at South African whites who, like herself, are scrambling to reinvent themselves for the new political era. Creator Pieter-Dirk Uys says Evita has conveniently forgotten her own role in Apartheid.

"Now she's so liberal, she's so enlightened. She's the first person to say that she's never, ever come across anybody who ever supported Apartheid."

According to Uys, Evita's Apartheid amnesia is understandable. When Apartheid was still in force he says, Evita like other whites, blithely overlooked its injustices.

"My target has always been the people, meaning myself. We were the relatively educated, relatively decent, more or less white South Africans. We pretended to be South Africans and Christians, and perpetuated one of the worst systems of terror against their own fellow human beings in history."

White hypocrisy and the Apartheid legacy are still strong themes for Uys and Evita. But in sharp contrast to her savage put downs of the old regime, Evita is gushingly respectful for the country's new multiracial leadership. During this year's election campaign, she appeared at an ANC rally, presenting Nelson Mandela with a Valentine heart that read, "I'm yours."

Pieter-Dirk Uys says Evita will eventually get around to criticizing

the new leaders once their political honeymoon is over, but on her current TV show, she unabashedly courts them.

"Oh, what a beautiful place, Cyril!"
"Yes, it's going to be a very lovely day, especially for fishing."

For her interview with ANC Secretary General Cyril Ramaphosa, Evita dons chest-high rubber waders, and joins him at his favorite sport, trout fishing.

"I'll make sure you don't drown," says Ramaphosa paternalistically to the concerned Evita.
"Oh, that sounds very wonderful of you, I must say. Ah, are the trout much different than other fish?" asks Evita.
"Yes, very different, very gentle," responds Ramaphosa.
"They won't bite?" asks Evita coyly.
"I've arranged that they shouldn't bite," responds Ramaphosa.
"(chuckling) I'm sure they listen to the ANC," says Evita with a sparkle in her eye.
"Oh, the ANC is omnipotent," Ramaphosa replies half-jokingly.

As the day wears on, Ramaphosa warms to his role, showing Evita how to cook a trout. She plies him with political questions, most of which get pat, political answers. But Evita's wacky style can make politicians forget that they're being interviewed for national TV. Over a candle-lit dinner of smoked trout, Ramaphosa visibly recoils at Evita's sudden mention of Winnie Mandela, the estranged wife of South Africa's President. Mrs. Mandela is a bitter foe of Ramaphosa's, though Ramaphosa wouldn't normally acknowledge that in such a public forum. Uys believes that Ramaphosa inadvertently revealed his feelings to Evita because he was put off-guard by her giddy chatter.

Uys comments on the exchange by saying that, "Cyril treated Evita with such delightful chauvinistic respect. He patted her on the shoulder and he patronized her. He treated her exactly as he would have treated a real, honest to God 59 year old Afrikaner aristocrat who was a cross between Miss Piggy and Imelda Marcos."

(Ramaphosa sings to Evita)
"Give us a day to build a dream on, and our imagination will make that moment live."

Ramaphosa, once the ANC's chief negotiator, serenades Evita with a song he sang during a particularly tough bargaining session at South Africa's democracy talks. Many whites feared the outcome of those talks would be a black-led government bent on racial reprisals. Instead, reconciliation is the new government's theme. That is also the theme of Evita Bezuidenhout's TV series, where the victims of some of Apartheid's worst oppression have a laugh at the past, and offer a good-humored vision of the future. I'm Ann Cooper in Johannesburg.

To find out more about Evita, or when and where to tune in for other National Public Radio broadcasts such as those heard on All Things Considered, please write to NPR, 635 Massachusetts Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20001, or call 202 414 3232.



Evita with Joe



Evita with the Mayor & Partick



Evita with Cyril

Drag Madness.

FROM 'THE ADVENTURES OF PRISCILLA,

QUEEN OF THE DESERT,'

BARES HIS SOUL (AND HIS BUNS) FOR POSTERITY

Nothing had prepared American film audiences for 'The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert' when it burst on the cinematic scene this past year. Its story, color, costumes, honesty in its portrayal of three drag queens traveling through the Australian outback, had people jumping for joy and screaming. But none screamed louder than 26 year old Guy Pearce in the role of Adam/Felicia, the bold, nasty, loud, self-centered swishy queen who learns a thing or two along the way.

I caught up with Pearce at the Nikko Hotel in West Hollywood still riding the waves of success. He was still reeling because of audience reaction to him and the film, including a Golden Globe Award nomination for Best Comedy. The muscular Pearce seemed shorter in the film, but he's a stunning 5'11" and said that he appeared shorter because co-stars Terrence Stamp and Hugo Weaving are over six feet. He started work at 18 and 'Priscilla' is only his fourth film. He currently co-stars in the Australian television series 'Neighbors,' lives in Melbourne and maintains an apartment in Sydney. He's casual, relaxed, very personable, charming and candid about himself and the film.

Pearce was raised by his mother and really had no male influence when he was growing up. His father was killed in an airplane accident when he was eight. His sister is two years older than he and is intellectually disabled, functioning as a ten year old. It all has helped him accept the idiosyncrasies of life and the differences in people.

The success of 'Priscilla' is still overwhelming for him though he's been away from it for a while. "We made the film in October of 1993 and I didn't have a thing to do with it until the publicity campaign. I had only seen it once for the cast and crew and hadn't seen it until the World Premiere here in Los Angeles. I've been working on 'Neighbors' so I didn't get to go to Cannes or other screenings. It feels like I've been a little dissociated from it all until now. The madness has hit all of a sudden. It's very exciting, of course. But yes, it's all come out of nowhere."

The dream of Adam/Felicia to climb up King's Canyon in central Australia in drag is her only wish, but one wonders what is the significance of King's Canyon?

"It's just a landmark," Pearce explained. "I guess it's our equivalent of the Grand Canyon. I think Stephen Elliott (the director) wanted to find something as visual as the rest of the film. And of course, it really paid off. It's really an incredible place that I had never been to before."

In the spectacle of the three drags climbing up to the rim of the Canyon, there is a close up of one satin-gloved hand grabbing another as they help each other through the rocky terrain. It's a beautiful moment that tells the audience more about their relationship than any dialogue.

"It's a really nice moment," said Pearce. "All the moments in the movie had some kind of fix like that. The thing I like about them is we don't dwell on it. That's the thing about Stephen. He likes to lull you into this sense of security and then whack you in the face like with the 'faggot' graffiti on the side of the bus. It's gone and it's over. It creates a nice dynamic. I like the way his mind does that. Nothing gets too bogged down."

It's always mind boggling to gays that straight men play the best drag roles in film, Pearce being no exception. Was there much background on gay life before he got into 'Priscilla'?

"Most of my friends are gay. I understand that lifestyle. I really do," he answered. "When people like myself are asked if they are gay or not, I find that it can become the focal point of the entire interview. I can

make funny standard answers and make people laugh, but when I do they are taken out of context. Someone asked me if I am gay and I said, 'No, but the boy I'm fucking is.' It's a funny little issue that always comes up

"My mother told me, 'There are straight people, drag queens, gay people and transvestites in the world. They're not more important than you, and you're not more important than them.' I just can't help but be open minded"

Australia has always been considered far away and 'the land down under' with a certain mystique about it. We wondered if there was more liberation in Australia from what America knows about it that made these recent gay films happen such as 'Priscilla' and soon-to-be-released 'The Sum of Us.'

"Sydney is the second largest gay population in the world next to San Francisco," said Pearce. "It is so overtly, openly gay. It has an incredible spirit about it. Melbourne is different and more conservative. It has the second highest Greek population in the world outside of Athens. It's a funny culture mix in Australia. The openness of homosexuality particularly in Sydney has never been pointed out in the world particularly in America."

"Everyone has asked me how did I know how to play a gay person because Australia is about being macho and straight? I tell them that was in the 1970s and 1980s. The top film producers wanted to make films about tough kinds of people and all the history stuff about Australia. Most of those films were about the outback and bush and being tough. That's really not all there is. That's why I really liked being part of this movie. We're actually opening the world's eyes a little to a very important part of Australia. A particular part of society that has the guts to walk around Sydney and say I'm gay and that's what I want to be and good for me."

"Mardi Gras is now the biggest moneymaker in Australia. It gets bigger and bigger every year. The conservatives scream about it, but there's nothing they can do. I think people are generally more open minded."

With his role as Felicia, would Pearce participate in the outrageousness of Mardi Gras? "Absolutely! I'll be frocking up! Go and get frocked!"

'Priscilla' has three of the greatest drag roles ever on film, but according to director Elliott, the cast was chosen as the best people for the job though drags were called to audition. "The drag queens were just hopeless," he has said. "We couldn't even get them in, it was that bad. They wouldn't show up and the one that did, threw up!" Pearce adds his perspective on the casting



Mascara & Muscle

by Ken Dickmann

"I would like to think that when someone gets a part that they are the best person for the job. Their personal life has nothing to do with it," he said. "That's what the movie is about, accepting people for what they are and not being prejudiced in any kind of way. When we started the movie, every drag queen in Sydney loved the idea that there was a movie being made about drag queens. But they hated the idea that they weren't playing the part. I love the idea that all the characters were based on them anyway. I didn't do anything other than act. Does that mean that every part I play from here on, am I going to cop some shit from the people that really are that kind of person?"

"My role of Felicia is a combination of three people whom I've never really met specifically, but I have met a lot of guys like Adam/Felicia. Many of my gay friends said I based the characters on them, just to get to them. But there's a lot of different qualities of a lot of different people that created Felicia."

"Did you find the woman in you doing this film?" we asked.

"Absolutely!" Pearce replied.

"And did you like her?" we continued

"Of course I do. I guess I've always had a close connection with my feminine half anyway. So it was really nice. The female part of me that came out in the movie is not the real female part of me. It was Adam's misogynistic view of the female part of himself. I really enjoyed the feminine half of me because it creates a perfect balance. It has to in everyone. People would be so much happier if they allowed themselves to do it. You stunt your growth if you don't. I had a lot of fun with that."

The costumes by Lizzy Gardiner and Tim Chappel, a leading drag costume designer and performer, are an integral part of the story as well as the visuals. Chappel is the drag that's lipsynching over the final credits. But considering the outrageousness of the costumes, the budget for them was only \$15,000 Australian dollars.

Pearce's makeup was created and applied by Strykermeyer, considered to be one of Australia's most talented Drag Artistes. "Stryker would do this stuff on my face," recalls Pearce. "It was like watching a painter painting. We got on so well, and it was an awe-inspiring experience having him work on me. I felt really blessed that he was doing my face."

"Stryker eliminates the masculine features from your face. He waxes down your eyebrows and covers them up with makeup so that they look just like skin. It looks like you've shaved your eyebrows. Your face is waxy beige, a nothing color. From that he brings out all the female qualities of your face and enhances those. That's the talent, that's his vision. He would just turn me into a girl! A cartoon version of a girl, but it was still female!"

"On an acting level, I learned about sustaining energy because Adam/Felicia works on a higher energy than I do. I'm a really positive person and I just float along on this positive way. The character really fights with his negative energy as much as he has the bravado and color and front and performance. It's not really positive. It's based on insecurity."

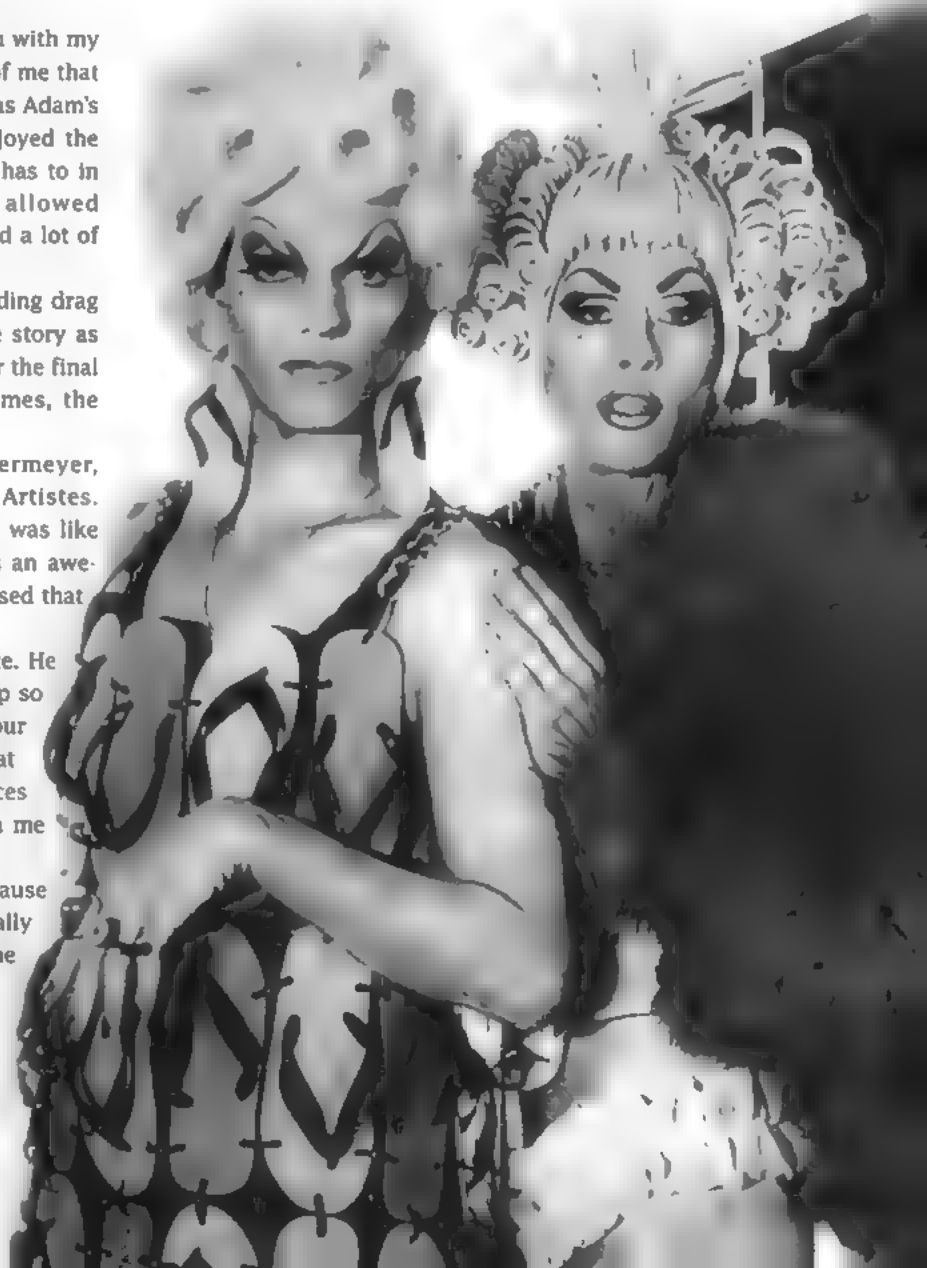
"I also learned of my ability and how much I can do. I learned how to laugh. That was good. The barriers and walls of your creative vision that constantly grows and matures. I felt I had made the step. I walked away from the movie falling in love with love which was great."

"Personally, I learned that life is about growing and accepting and loving more and more. It was really a nice little gift for me to be handed doing this movie. It was an inspiration to be able to create positivity and happiness. Everyone has the power to do that but few know that."

"My goal is to remain positive and happy in what I do. Now that I can make choices and not regret anything later and not feel embarrassed about anything. I think when you have the open minded approach then the things you are meant to do are going to come to you. When and where that happens, I don't know. I like the fact that I don't know."

(Special thanks to Jim Harrison of San Diego's "Gay and Lesbian Times" for his contribution.)

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Hugo Weaving & Guy Pearce portraying two fish out of water & into the frying pan
PHOTO COURTESY GRAMERCY PICTURES



Sarah Miles

Actress Turns Writer and Discovers Cross-dressing

by Ken Dickmann



Daughter' and 'The Servant.' She created cinematic history with Mishima's story 'The Sailor Who Fell to Grace in the Sea' in which she actually masturbated on screen. She has been married to director/writer Robert Bolt ('Man for All Seasons') twice and currently lives with him outside London.

Dragazine caught up with her in the heat of the summer at a top floor white walled Fairfax area apartment. Sitting on the floor in a white crochet summer dress over a small white slip, Miles was the epitome of cool on that hot day. Her journey with her friends that gave birth to 'Charlemagne' was just one of many adventures in her life.

"When I was 18, a few centuries ago, I was taken to a place in Paris called the Salon du Gouttiere (salon of the gutter)," she said. "I hadn't a clue. Laurence Olivier took to me this place when I was making 'Term of Trial' and I knew nothing even though I was

It was just another opening of a play this past year, and editor Lois Commondenominator and I made our way to see 'Charlemagne,' a play about the trials of a cross-dresser based on the real friends of actress Sarah Miles. The true life story was fascinating enough for Miles to write a play about the various stages of self-acceptance that her married friend Harry had to go through to become Hattie.

On this particular night, a theater party was happening of the social cross-dressing group called Powder Puffs of Orange County (P.P.O.C.). The 99 seat equity waiver theater was filled with men dressed in various feminine outfits, from brightly colored polyester flower prints to evening wear to slacks and sandals. The heterosexual men were escorted by their wives, children and girlfriends in tow, and some couples dressed similarly to each other. Lois and I were taken aback.

As the play proceeded, all eyes were on the stage as Harry comes out as a cross-dresser to his wife Clara and their best friend Lilibet. He is accepted for who he is until he decides to go out of the English countryside cottage in full dress. Eventually, Clara fulfills her desire to become pregnant by him. Harry moves out and becomes a happy transsexual.

The Powder Puffs were ever watchful as the story developed. During the intermissions they chatted with each other and we with them. We approached a few and found out that the story was almost identical to the process of most of the men without going into transsexualism.

One man had been married for 37 years, told wife he was a cross-dresser right from the very beginning and it was fine, but telling isn't experiencing. Five years ago he started dressing in the house and that's when she flipped out. He said only when he finally started dressing is when she couldn't handle it. They are still together as the wife developed cancer and the husband is taking care of her.

Greeting and meeting at the end of the play was author Sarah Miles. Surrounded by a group of well-wishing Puffs, the sparkle in Miles' eyes showed that she was having a ball.

Her first film at 18 was 'Term of Trial' with Sir Laurence Olivier, but she gained international recognition with David Lean's 'Ryan's

a young kid popping into Soho occasionally. There was a stripper there that was absolutely striking with this gorgeous body and she looked at me in the audience and winked. I was aghast. Larry took me backstage and here was the most glorious woman I'd ever seen. Hair was real, the breasts were real. She had a great cup of balls on her. He was a man with a wife. I was 18! What I'm saying is it's been around a long time. And this guy was so sexy. He was a real horny guy wanting me! Magnificent breasts and a cock tucked away.

"But in England I found the hatred that gays have for transsexuals. I thought gays had grown up a bit. They want people to understand them, but they seem incapable of understanding another group. I think what it is, is they can't be comfortable with someone who wants to take off the thing that was you, and it immediately becomes a threatening issue with them. A drag queen infatuation is fine, but I think because the transsexual had done and gone the whole journey is incomprehensible to a gay."

In 'Charlemagne' it's obvious that the wife Clara would have difficulties with her husband with whom she wanted to have a child. What was Clara's most difficult moment in the play?

"I think telling him to leave the house," Miles explained. "She's been besieged and allowed him to go about indoors as long as everyone in the county doesn't know. I think she was taking on as much as someone her type could. When she found out she was being deceived, I think that was the last straw because she was pregnant anyway. She couldn't possibly come to terms with daddy."

"I found out doing the play that even though the man was on drugs for the physical transformation, that after three weeks, the sperm can return for impregnation and the need comes back. So everything was possible within the story line. In the real story, in the Harry figure, he goes crazy when he's going through the change. We couldn't do it in the play, but when Harry/Hattie exits the house, he bites into a wine glass and chews up the glass. He says, "This is nothing, this is water off a duck." And he exits. Which is what really happened so I wanted to use it. I actually saw it with Harry in real life. The pain was so excruciating."

Harry is challenging Clara when he calls her on her sexual manipulations when she was nude in the bath. A popular theory is that women won't admit that they do sexual manipulations. Only recently through the feminist movement do they admit to their real sexual being that it's OK to use feminine wiles. Maybe it's was just Harry's idea of what he thinks is a woman as opposed to what is a woman.

"Then you have 'what really is a woman?'" responded Miles. "We're all trying to find that essence of womanhood, probably failing all around. But with my friend, he told me that he used to make love to his wife with her on top, so he could lay on the pillow and yet he was thrusting towards that part of her that he needed to become.

"I think he came in touch with his own femininity within him and came alive. He suddenly got a flash of perspective on the actual truth of womanhood which I believe is how I wrote that scene. I think Harry saw that womankind tends to create erotic images of themselves. I think Harry's femininity enabled him to see that more than an ordinary man.

"He also finds that by discovering his femininity, the wife in turn discovers hers. I think a cross-dresser has a better idea of that than a drag queen who only projects a physical image.

"That night a really tall, blond Jane Russell type came over and told me: 'The whole thing is we want to really take over the woman's persona. In order to do that, the first thing we put on is the wig.' It may be the last thing a drag puts on, but it's the first thing a transvestite puts on. I'm not terribly clear yet the difference between a cross-dresser and a transvestite.

"Using the word transsexual whether you had the operation or not, you're still a transsexual on a soul level. The operation is peripheral to what you really are. Second stage transsexualism is where you talk about having the operation, but you never do and you live that way anyway

"What I gathered from the people I interviewed and the couple the play is based on is that cross-dressing is very far from being a fetish. It is in fact, the sole need. Compare that to a fetish where you fuck in rubber. That's a fetish. He had a sole need to be someone, but he was in the wrong body.

"I think cross-dressers come out late because they sit on it and try to squash it and hope it will go away. The other thing I found out, at least in England, is the males who want to be women are usually quite elderly and very tall. It's quite strange, whereas the women to men are small. And yet, just being in a room, you can't tell it isn't a man because a woman to man would lower the voice, and get the facial hair and lop off their tits. So that's more believable than man to woman. A lot of transsexuals wear bracelets that tinkle in order to keep the voice high

"In real life, Harry/Hattie died of cancer. Hattie was a computer whiz which my husband and I both needed help with. She was full of sunshine even on a gray day. She had blond hair. She had thick wrists and truck drivers arms. Her face turned into a woman beautifully and his hair was lovely anyway so she had that as

an asset. She didn't have to wear wigs. She had a pleasant way of dressing as she lived in Majorca and made the transition quite beautifully.

"The wife and she got back together again. In fact, they made the whole journey, because they were very, very close before the whole thing happened. It was a shame that Harry died because they would have gotten back together.

"But I never met a cross-dresser that was feminine. They are all men. They are butch men. That's the whole extraordinary mystery."

Sarah's life has been one of self discovery. In her own journey, we wondered if when she wrote this play that her own journey had not influenced her as to her sympathy or understanding of subject.

"It was accepted," Miles explained. "I truly can't think of anything that upsets me through my life. Any quirk, or sexuality as long as there's no damage that's done or forced against their will. Think of the term Chick With Dicks. With a lot of people, it's an ideal to have tits and cock

"What I did find in my travels to India were these incredible androgynous beings that were eunuchs really. They are still worshipped and put about. You see these beautiful, beautiful boys standing at the altars of the temple that are real people. They are still around.

"The first god or goddess ever on earth was from northern India called Arphanareeswara (man and woman in one form) who was androgynous. The god went to China and became Quan Yin who is the goddess of mercy. She went to Japan and became Quan Yon. The same female energy went to Tibet and became Tara, the goddess of love. The same went to Israel and became the Virgin Mary. So the androgynous split into male and female deities. But it's interesting to me that the first god was androgynous. I believe we're all moving that way."

Within the experience of writing 'Charlemagne,' it had to have an effect and become a learning experience. "My son was a heroin addict and when he came off, I got to know some of those kids who met the devil head on and had the strength to withdraw. It's a short cut to

amazing wisdom. It's like a university in a way. They are changed people, but they are wonderfully changed and have an openness. That's what I found also when I was doing my research on transsexuals. I didn't meet one that was narrow minded. I didn't meet anybody who hadn't looked into the heart. I haven't met anybody who is bigoted or blinkered or funnel visioned. They all had this magic thing that I just think has got to come into the planet quickly. I found through the writing and meeting these people this unconditional love. That's something I try to express in 'Charlemagne.'



Photo: Ed Krueger

Lynn Ann Leveridge as Lilibet and Hans Tester as Harry in Sarah Miles' 'Charlemagne.' Sarah Miles' shocking serious comedy is a heroic journey through an emotionally charged labyrinth. In this play a man is forced to confront his sexual identity, exploring his compulsions first as a transvestite and eventually as a transsexual.

IT'S MOMMA'S TURN!

THE CYCLE SLUT THEY CALL THE OLD SEQUIN

Zeus Studios Co-Owner and Dungeon Master Mikal Bales, aka The Cycle Slut's Momma Goddamn, Reflects On The Time Of His Life He Calls The Time Of His Life

By Mike Cammondenominator / Edited by Ken Dickman

1976

drag queens from Los Angeles called The Cycle Sluts hit the spotlight and there was no turning

brazenly assaulted common sensibility for gays and non-gays with their brand of exaggerated

outrageous individual character makeup and high, high wigs. Coming on the scene right after the demise of San Francisco's glitter queens The Cockettes, The Cycle Sluts

creative drag a mile or two further by combining this over-the-top look at a little leather S/M in their stage personas. Where the Cockettes failed outside of their home base, The Cycle Sluts became international hits. With professional production people behind them, the non-talent queens gave themselves over to the pro's who turned them and their show into a slick entertainment that crossed many a biased line. Even the jaded queens of San Francisco welcomed them with open arms.

On a weekend in Fall, Dragazine visited the West Los Angeles home of Mikal Bales, the Slut known as Momma Goddamn, who was the Master/Mistress of Ceremonies for the shows. While the old days are fond memories for Mikal, he stayed within the leather community and for the past 17 years is a co-owner of the adult video production company Zeus, which specializes in safe and sane consensual B&D performance art, fetish-oriented to the leather community.



How did The Cycle Sluts get started?

First off, allow me to apologize to the remaining Sluts, because how I answer your questions will be the way I remember the experience, which may differ enormously from the way my Slut sisters might remember it. Because it happened so many years ago, it's like describing for you an outrageous movie that I once saw. It's very difficult to believe that I was actually one of the Sluts . . . the pretty one as I recall. I've always been borderline eccentric, and in the early 70's, the idea of being a Cycle Slut was about as eccentric as I could get.

At that time, my group of friends lived together in an elegant old French-Normandy type apartment building in Hollywood called the Trianon. Also at that time, Barbra Streisand's film, "The Owl And The Pussycat" had just been released. In that film, Barbra played an actress and model in a movie within the movie called "Cycle Sluts." It was nearing Halloween, and two neighbor friends, Kenny Poe and John East (lovers, now deceased), wanted to be Cycle Sluts for Halloween. I was designing show costumes for a living, so they asked me to design their Cycle Slut drag. My lover at the time, Bill Bailey, and I loved the idea and asked Kenny and John if we could join them as Cycle Sluts. Soon six other Trianon neighbors and four friends from San Francisco joined our foursome, and suddenly we were fourteen Cycle Sluts!

So then you designed the costumes for the group?

Not really. I may have conceived the idea for the four of us, but when it became the fourteen of us, we all agreed that we'd keep our beards, moustaches, and whatever body hair we had. We headed for Frederick's of Hollywood for killer spiked heels and black foundation garments. The very same Frederick's sales lady that sold me my first Merry Widow still schleps Merry Widows at Frederick's today! I was dealing with a masculinity image problem as far as drag was concerned, and as butch as I could muster, I asked the Frederick's sales lady to show me a black Merry Widow for my "girlfriend." The sales lady stepped back, put both hands on her hips thumbs forward, looked me over and said, "a 38C, right?" She was right! Once I got over myself, we became friends and over the years, she sold the group most of its off-the-rack costume items, like foundation garments and shoes.

Each Slut designed his/her own "look" with the only restriction being that it had to be black, chrome, cross-gendered and sado-

masochistic. Our hairdo's got way out of hand early on and became one of our collective "visual" trademarks. When the fourteen of us put our Cycle Slut drag on together for the first time, we became this totally unique and unruly pack of gender-fucked S/M Drag Queens. At the time, and I think even today there hasn't been anything else quite like us. Anyhow, we were dressed to kill for the Halloween that was to change our lives forever.

Where did your public debut happen?

In those days, the GGRC Ball was the big Halloween costume event held in town. It took place in the grand ballroom of the International Hotel near LAX. The fourteen of us, our boyfriends, and our circle of friends rented a huge suite at the hotel. We'd planned to enter the costume contest, but we took so long partying and getting ready that it was past midnight when we went down to the ballroom. The contest and judging were almost complete. Well, with a lot of cocktails for courage and the goading of our friends, the fourteen of us crashed the judging process, got up on stage and behaved vulgarly. The place erupted for us! The GGRC people tried to resurrect their judging process but the crowd simply wouldn't let us off the stage. In the end, the judging panel reluctantly awarded costume sweepstakes to The Cycle Sluts. We felt badly (NOT!) for the other costume contest entrants who'd worked hard on their costumes and had showed up on time, but that was the first time we'd experienced the power our collective visual had on an audience, and we liked it. This mutant genderfucked drag atrocity called The Cycle Sluts was born.

Were you discovered there by talent scouts?

No. We intended to hang up our tits after winning costume sweepstakes at the GGRC, but the next night was Studio One's Halloween Party. Since we had such a good time at the GGRC, we wondered if we could make it happen again. By this time, the word was out and the Studio One crowd was ready and waiting for us! The Cycle Sluts Are Coming! The Cycle Sluts Are Coming! In those days, Studio One's bar ran the full length of the dance floor along one side. When we got there, all fourteen of us got up on that long bar, kicked off drink glasses and beer bottles, behaved vulgarly (again), and the place went nuts and awarded us costume sweepstakes (again).

Among the party-goers that night was a man named Bill Hudnut (now deceased) who worked for a theatrical manager named Roy

Gerber. Roy managed among other celebrities Bette Midler and Dianne Carroll. Hudnut went to his boss Gerber the next day and tried to describe The Cycle Sluts. Gerber asked if these Sluts sang, danced or what. Hudnut said he didn't know but that we looked great!

By now we really had hung up our tits, but it was arranged that we'd get us back in drag for Roy Gerber to see us. Gerber was pretty taken back by our look, and asked us again if any one of us sang or danced or played an instrument. We were all working full time at various jobs and careers. We just all happened to be in the right place at the right time, of course looking absolutely fabulous. We were just having some Halloween fun, but Roy Gerber saw something in us and sat the group down to discuss our future(s) in show business. We were beside ourselves!

You can't know how hard we worked, and we had no idea how much work it would be. Please remember, as a group we were talentless. Roy asked us to commit our evenings to rehearsals. He hired a Broadway choreographer, a local voice coach, and a gifted special material writer named Tracy Quinn. Our rehearsal studio was this wonderful old second story dump on the corner of Yucca and Vine in Hollywood. Every night they tried to squeeze some talent out of us by teaching us to sing and dance together. Even though I was clearly the prettiest Slut, I was also the least talented. I just couldn't sing or dance, so I became the Master/Mistress of Ceremonies - the Joel Grey of our cabaret act.

Where did Momma come from?

As I said, with no singing or dancing talent, Momma came from desperation, and the writing skills of Tracy Quinn. We created our own personas that became the inspiration for

**WE WERE DRESSED TO KILL
FOR THE HALLOWEEN THAT
WAS TO CHANGE OUR
LIVES FOREVER.**

the skits and songs written for us. We gave the writers our image and they gave us our act. All of us did, however, create our own "looks" and on-stage personas. I think we were our own personally exaggerated versions of Tim Curry as his character Dr. Frankenfurter in "The Rocky Horror Picture Show." Our four Slut friends from San Francisco had gone home, and the local ten of

us enhanced and elaborated on our stage identities. We were party crashing personalities long before we were an act.

Do you remember all the names and personas of the Sluts?

Yes, and with enormous affinity and affection. Four of the original ten Cycle Sluts have died, so I'll describe each of them in no special order; Kenny Poe was "Arlene Allure," the group's faux intellectual; John East was "Racine Johnson," an East Texas beautician; Carlos Franco was "Carlotta," our stripper from Tijuana, and Mace Jeffers was "Gloria Hole." His face sat five and was our group's loose woman. The remaining Sluts are Bill Bailey, who was "Wanda Lust," the group butch; Bob Musaccio known as "Gina Kowalski," the group's dumb blond; Joe Rossi who called himself "Roseanna Popparazzi," the group's Italian motorcycle mamma; Steve Monds as "Lola Loin," the group's tramp, and Mark Johnson as "Ruby-Jean Dubois," the group's 50's fashion plate. He always wore leopard skin pedal pushers, a leather jacket and a beehive hairdo. I, of course was Momma Goddamn, the group's elder stateswoman and business spokesperson. There was a book out on Bette Davis called Mother Goddamn. I've always been one of her admirers, so I just shortened it a little bit. *

Besides a couple of pretty good disco dancers, there really was no other talent?

If initially we had collective talent, it would have been for making entrances and creating outrageous photo opportunities. Two of London's finer hotels are the Dorchester and the Savoy. The mere thought of The Cycle Sluts going to tea at the Dorchester was all we needed to make the London Times' front page. Our producers had cleverly arranged to bus the disbelieving press to the Dorchester conveniently ahead of the Sluts' arrival in the producers' two very stately vintage Rolls Royce limos. As I remember, the Dorchester's front entrance is off the street in sort of a courtyard. When the Dorchester's management got wind of a social atrocity heading its way, its entire staff was out front to prevent our entrance. With the press and

paparazzi already there, the Sluts arrived upon a near panic situation. We weren't interested in tea at the Dorchester! We were interested in the front page of the London Times. We piled out of our limos in full Slut regalia and collectively did vulgar things to the cars' Spirit of Ecstasy hood ornaments, the car's exhaust pipes (use your imaginations), and to the hotel staff who blocked our entrance by locking arms. We did what we did best . . . make entrances and create photo opportunities.



What other publicity stunts do you remember?

Early on in the Sluts trip there was a wonderful "entertainment" magazine called After Dark. After Dark was celebrating one of its anniversaries in the Crystal Room of the Beverly Hills Hotel. Since we weren't invited, we decided to crash the party. And since all we could do as a group at that time was make entrances, we decided to make a very impressive entrance for the celebration. Plus, we all wanted to meet Ann Margret who was being honored by After Dark as Entertainer

of the Year. For the first of many times, we hired a garbage truck, had it steamed clean and arrived at the front entrance of the Beverly Hills Hotel inside of it. The hotel staff, the After Dark party-goers, and Ann Margret didn't know what to do about us, but Hollywood Reporter columnist George Christy did. "Guess who crashed last night's After Dark Party at the Beverly Hills Hotel," was how he wrote us up the following day in his "It's A Great Life" column.

The Cycle Slut phenomenon was starting

to happen, and the Gay community's enthusiasm and support was our magic carpet. When we were booked in Australia, Sydney's Gay community was out in force waiting for us. For Sydney's front page publicity prank, we decided to outrage their citizens by holding a picnic press conference at the city dump, Teppe Point. There were mountains of garbage and us, and all of the press came. It was so awful! Meat pies are Australia's hamburgers, so we dared to serve a picnic meal of meat pies to the press in the middle of mountains of

**SINCE WE WEREN'T INVITED,
WE DECIDED
TO CRASH THE PARTY.**

* (Editor's Note: Mother Goddamn was a character who ran a brothel in the 1925 Broadway play "The Shanghai Gesture". Due to the nature of the play, the power of the Hays Office had rejected at least three dozen versions for film. When it was made in 1941 by director Josef von Sternberg, the character played by Ona Munson became Mother Gin Sling and the brothel became a gambling house. Davis wanted to play the role, but Warner Bros. wanted her to become "sweeter" and offered her "God's Country and the Woman" in which she would portray a lumberjack! She rebelled. Whitney Stine's 1974 book "Mother Goddamn" was originally a look at the Hollywood system through side comments by Davis. It was such a terrific look that Davis suggested Stine use more of her and she worked closely with him. The book became a career biography with candid notes by Davis and a huge success.)

WHEN WE HEARD "TWO MINUTES, LADIES," WE WERE LIKE RACE HORSES.

garbage. It was the perfect outrage that got us on the front page of the Sydney newspapers. After we were done, we led a parade of garbage trucks back through town to our theater. Opening night in Sydney was pandemonium!



engagements because we worked so hard.

In addition to our visual outrage, our material was very on-the-edge to include original songs written for us. We also added our spin on old standards like "You Made Me Love You." When the Sluts sang and danced to "You Made Me Love You," with whips and chains, trust me, it was over-the-edge. We sang our hearts out . . . just not in tune. A crucial part of our act were three very talented offstage backup singers that made us sound great. They traveled with us everywhere. So there we were, out front belting out our songs and sounding almost good with enormous help from our band and backup singers. In song and dance and skit, we took pot shots at every social stereotype across the board, however we always took the toughest pot shots of all at ourselves. We purposely set ourselves up for audience astonishment, ridicule, upset and outrage. The formula worked in every major U.S. city, and a long list of major cities abroad. We were originals.



Did you use special theatrical makeup?

We used everything from Gunnite and Spackle to house paint! Then, just before we went on stage, we'd spray each other's faces with Aquanet hairspray to seal on our paint jobs. Because our dance routines were so strenuous, all ten of us were always dripping wet after each performance, and even Aquanet couldn't save our faces. I think in addition to being thoroughly entertained, our audiences appreciated just how hard we worked to get them to like us. All of us lost weight during

Did you become friends with other show business celebrities?

We opened at the Roxy on the Sunset Strip, then moved down to the Whisky A Go Go and received a lot of celebrity attention. Two of our favorite celebrities that regularly attended our shows were Sally Struthers and Martha Raye. They had such fun with our show and would come backstage and would sing backup for us. The audience couldn't see them, and their singular objective was to try to crack us up. We had a hard enough time counting to eight, plus kicking and singing in unison without trying to ignore Martha Raye

singing our lyrics with her false teeth out. What a fabulous woman!

During a lengthy Whiskey run, Alan Carr asked the Sluts to be his midnight entertainment surprise for a birthday party he was throwing for Mick Jagger. Alan had asked us to arrive early so as not to be seen by any of his guests, especially Mick. We arrived early. Alan's surprise ran late and we were going stir-crazy in Mr. Carr's h-u-g-e bedroom suite. We told Alan we need some diversion or we would go nuts. Shortly, Alan returned to the suite with his idea of a diversion. He brought with him Alana (Mrs. George) Hamilton, Altovese (Mrs. Sammy) Davis Jr., and Liza Minelli! Those three incredible women provided us with one of the most fabulous evenings we ever had. I can't quite remember whether Mick got off on us as his surprise birthday entertainment or not, but we sure got off on Alana, Altovese and Liza. And yes, dear readers, we got all three of them in full Slut drag. Ah, for a photograph of the thirteen of us!

In London, we met queens that worked at Buckingham for the Queen, but not the Queen. Opening night Broadway theater security told us Princess Margaret and Lord Snowdon had slipped in to the Royal Box, but they didn't come backstage to meet us. We'd been practicing our curtsies, but never got the chance to show them off.

Any dressing room stories?

The calculatedly vicious dressing room make-up banter was where the true Slut humor flourished. Our writers would just sit and take notes of us dishing each another, and incorporate our dressing room dish into on stage one-liners. Most of us gave ourselves over an hour each performance for make-up. We insisted on dressing rooms large enough so we could all make-up together. And they were always filled with flowers, gifts, boyfriends and celebrity guests like Liberace or Cher. It was a nightly madhouse! When we heard "two minutes, Ladies," we were like race horses, thoroughbreds of course, at their gates. And when our band struck up "Love Is A Killer," God help anybody standing in our way. We hit the stage like a bomb! Most of us had a couple of cocktails before each show. We'd invent new drink combinations every night and name them, and the house bartenders would keep us supplied. We really did want to give the audiences the best time they'd ever have in cabaret theater. Any

performer can tell you the feeling you have before going on stage is like no other feeling we experience. Even just remembering those times is a rush for me.

What about sex?

The Cycle Sluts spread entertainment havoc well before the Great Plague on our lifestyle, when sex was safer, freer and a lot more frequent. Our sexual attractiveness as Sluts blew us away. All over the world, in full Slut drag, we could pick and choose from the most extraordinary men imaginable. It was a sexual fantasy never to be duplicated. Each of us had a boyfriend du jour in every city we played. The reasons they were attracted to us were mixed. Some were "starfuckers," others were curious and the rest were genuinely attracted. It was clear that the audience realized that underneath the makeup and

EVERY MAN SHOULD DO DRAG AT LEAST ONCE IN HIS LIFETIME.



Mikal Bales
Momma Goddamn



John East
Racine Johnson



Bob Musaccio
Gina Kowalski



Mace Jeffers
Olivia Hale



Bill Bailey
Wanda Just



Joe Rossi
Roseanna Popparaggi

spiked bras filled with birdseed, there were ten good looking athletic guys on stage. We were a lot more aggressive also. We would approach totally strange men as Sluts in a brazen manner we'd never employ out of Drag. There was a feeling of security in our group, our notoriety, and our paint jobs. And all of us would procure for each other. If any one of us would spot someone attractive, the other nine Sluts would practically carry that poor man to the interested Slut. They didn't stand a chance, and they loved it. It seemed like there was complete behavioral safety behind our Slut personas.

That sounds like an endorsement for drag.

Absolutely! I think every man, gay or straight, should do Drag at least once in his life.

Who else in the Slut entourage do you remember vividly?

David Glomb. Having mixed sound for the stage productions of "Grease" and "The Rocky Horror Show," David was brought on board as the sound engineer for the Sluts. David became the Sluts' photographic historian as a sideline.

One other person also comes to mind and that is Joyce. Joyce was the group's groupie and would show up to many of our shows at her own expense and help us back stage with costume changes and such. Each Slut had their own following, but Joyce loved us all, and every one of us loved her dearly too.

Did anything bad or horrendous happen on stage?

Which performance would you like to talk about? Except for Steve "Lola" and Carlos "Carlotta," none of us were dancers, so they choreographed our stage movements in clumps and bunches, and it was those very intricate combinations of those clumps and bunches that made us look good. But they were dangerous as each one of us was counting to eight in unison,

trying to sing, and selling ourselves to the audience. Every movement and gesture was planned out, and if any one of us would screw up the count by zigging instead of zagging, bones could break, and they did. The act was quite different from a lot of drag that you see that is personal and interpretive. You rarely see multiple drag that is regimented and tightly choreographed, which is part of why our act was so original and slick. Not surprisingly, one night I zigged when I should have zagged and broke Bill "Wanda's" wrist with one of my truly fabulous sky-high kicks. But Wanda finished the show with her broken wrist. We always finished the show no matter how bad we were hurting.

Any funny shtick you can recall?

In the beauty salon sketch, three of the Sluts were beauty parlor patrons and three were hairdressers. Gina Kowalski played the dumb blond in the group. She sat in the chair to get her hair done. She was fussing and fidgeting and she said, "I'm just so discombobulated because of my boyfriend, I just don't know which end is up." And the response, which is old hat by now was, "Well, you better figure that out and make up your mind because I've got to wash one of them!" That always got a huge laugh. We also had another line written for us when dishing one another. It went, "She was so ugly, that they had to hang a pork chop around her neck to get dogs to play with her." Years later, I heard that line on Carol Burnett!

What does Drag say about masculinity?

There are those Gays (and most Straights) who feel Drag is detrimental to a masculine image. Personally, I feel if men are secure in their masculinity, Drag can and should be a good time. For those men who are more interested in Drag and less worried about their masculinity, Drag can be a lifestyle. I've

never personally been interested in a Drag lifestyle, but it's always fascinated me. I can remember my parents cross-dressing at Halloween once. I thought it was great! There were those Drag purists out there that never accepted The Cycle Sluts as "true" Drag. We had muscular bodies, facial and body hair. We presented skit material that clearly rubbed Drag (and everything else) the wrong way. Even we felt short-sheeted when a reviewer dismissed us as just Drag Queens who'd run out of Nair. What Drag says about masculinity is a multi-faceted question that will be debated forever. I'd like to say again that every man should do Drag at least once in his lifetime. Every one of The Sluts was and is proud to say we were Drag Queens that broke through some stereotyping and took Drag into minds and places it had never been before.

Would you do Cycle Slut Drag again, or any type of Drag for that matter?

I haven't done Drag Queen drag since the last performance as a Slut some 20 years ago. When I see Drag today, I think about how lucky the Sluts were to have had the opportunity to take our style of Drag as far as we did. When I remember myself in Drag, I have to laugh because the thought of me doing the Slut thing again just wouldn't work for me. It was an extraordinary experience that could never be duplicated. One of my favorite Drag memories happened about two years into the Slut trip. The GGRC invited the Sluts back to one of its Halloween Balls as on-stage guests. As the group's emcee, I thanked the GGRC and the Gay community for their enormous support. I commented to the crowd that we were going to open at The Stardust Hotel in Las Vegas wearing the exact same costumes (black tailed tuxedos, makeup, wigs and heels) that we were wearing on stage that night. Our Gay "family" gave us a standing ovation and sent us off to the Stardust with star dust in our eyes. That's the kind of memory I'd like to keep in tact and pure, and reason enough for me not to do Drag anymore. It could never be that good again.



Steve Monds
Lola Loin



Kenny Poe
Arlene Allure



Mark Johnson
Ruby Jean DuBois



Carlos Franco
Carbotta

What about the Leather Community? Did they understand the Drag element that crossed over?

Some did, some didn't. Some do, some don't. At one point, Drummer magazine, which caters to the leather and fetish community, put Mace "Gloria Hole" Jeffers on one of its covers in full Slut drag. There was such an uproar from elements of the Leather Community objecting to putting a "Drag Queen" on the cover of a "Man's" magazine. The flip side of that uproar came from those members of the Leather Community who felt as we did. Life is too short to take whatever we wear too seriously. That particular magazine cover featuring a Slut was testimony that there was precious little middle ground

ANYTHING YOU PUT ON YOUR BACK IS DRAG, WHETHER IT'S LEATHER OR FEATHERS.

regarding the Sluts. No matter what your personal drag preference was, you either loved or hated the Sluts. If the Sluts were to happen today, nobody would even raise an eyebrow. In the early 70's, we were a heated topic of cross-community debate.

Today you're Zeus Studios' co-owner/producer/director. Is there any connection to your Drag past?

At the risk of offending some of my Leather Community constituents and customers, I think anything you put on your back is Drag, whether it's leather or feathers. Drag is the outer trappings of our inner fantasies. I've been a fundraiser and active member of the Leather Community since I left the Sluts 20 years ago. There were several members of the Sluts who were dallying in the leather/fetish scene early on, and I was one of them. But I see little connection between The Cycle Sluts and Zeus Studios, except perhaps for my personal passion for style and presentation.

What finally brought it to an end?

Even the best of parties wind down eventually, but I personally think we were just too far out there for the times, and could never really break into mainstream entertainment acceptance. We were the darlings of under ground entertainment, but upper level mainstream producers and promoters were afraid to take the BIG chance with us unless we homogenized our act. We were arrogant enough to think we could crash our way into mainstream entertainment the same way we crashed After Dark's party at the Beverly Hills Hotel. We learned the hard way, that mainstream show biz wasn't having us the way we were. Roy Gerber managed the first half of our "career," and Judy Thomas managed the second half. Both of them worked their asses off for us, but they could only take our gender mix and outrage so far and no further. Roy and Judy took us to England and Australia and every major city in America, and it was an awesome journey.

Do you still keep in touch with any of the group?

Four of the original Sluts have died. I'm still in close touch with Bill "Wanda Lust" Bailey and Mark "Ruby Jean DuBois" Johnson, but there will never be an official reunion. Our beloved groupie Joyce was at the memorial services for Kenny "Arlene Allure" Poe several months ago. Ah, Joyce. It would have surprised me if she wasn't there. I've lost contact with "Lola," and "Roseanna," and "Gina."

What do you think would be a good title for this piece?

Someone asked me the other day if I ever thought of writing my memoirs, and if so, what would the title of the book be. My first question was and is, who'd buy it? It was fun to daydream about such a title, so I came up with "Drag Queen, Director, Dungeon Master . . . The Three Faces of Improbability." I tend to remember things past in pastels instead of harsher blacks and whites. But I like your opening observation when you called my Slut experience "The Time Of My Life," for that it was.

Our Sluts experience was the kinky version of the Lana Turner myth, wearing a tight sweater, being discovered on a soda fountain stool at Schwab's drug store in Hollywood. What a fucking fabulous fluke! Thanks for giving me the opportunity to hobble down memory lane in dusty five inch spikes. *Dg*

Did you ever have a group crisis to work through that threatened the existence of the act?

If you're asking if we fought, you bet we fought, but we were so in awe of what was happening to us, that we resolved our differences so as not to threaten the act. In fact, when there was a fight between Sluts going on, our performance and the shows those nights were usually better. There were relationships within the group that changed in those 3 1/2 years. As I look back on those times, if you remember that The Cycle Sluts consisted of ten Drag Queens, that is a very volatile mix of egos, tempers and agendas. I think we handled ourselves and our commitment to the act pretty well.

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